

IVINE INFLUENCE

The True SPRING of the
Extraordinary WORK

A T

CAMBUSLANG

A N D

Other Places in the West of Scotland;

ILLUSTRATED in a

LETTER

F R O M

Mr. ALEXANDER WEBSTER, one
of the Ministers of this CITY,

T O A

Gentleman in the Country.

The Second Edition,

With a PREFACE, and several Additions, in Answer
to the Reverend Mr. Fisher's Review, &c.

E D I N B U R G H,

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TO THE READER.

SINCE the first Publication of the following Letter, by the Gentleman to whom it was directed;—the Reverend Mr. Fisher, Minister of the Gospel in the Associate Congregation at Glasgow, has in his Review of the Preface to a Narrative, &c. thought fit to treat the Author of this Letter not in the handsomest Manner; nor have Messieurs Robe, Willison, Ogilvy, &c. escaped the heaviest Censures.—I believe these Gentlemen have learned, with me, from the highest Authority, not to render Railing for Railing; and can make particular Allowance for Mr. Fisher's unguarded Warmth; considering his present Circumstances.

I have added, in Answer to his Review so far as it concerns my Letter, several marginal Notes under the Places objected to.—Some of them contain little more than Mr. Fisher's Charge, and a Direction to these Paragraphs on which 'tis founded, leaving the Reader to judge for himself.—And indeed I should have left the Reverend Author in full Possession of all his angry Observations, had not this Edition been called for, being persuaded that the blessed Work he opposes could not thereby have suffered a great deal: For Mr. Fisher will be found, however unpolished in his Treatment of those who differ from him, yet so polite to the Cause they maintain, as to pay his Compliments only at a Distance, without disturbing the main Argument.

What he has pass'd untouched, and what he has acknowledged, will go far to prove the Question in debate.—Accordingly the Reader will observe, —

That he condescends to allow that Persons may be converted within the Pale of the established Church of Scotland.

“*Altho’ (says he, p. 24.) Mr. Webster artfully insinuates, that it has been charged upon the Gentlemen of the Secession as he calls them, and drawn as an Inference from their Writings, — That not one Soul can be converted within the Pale of the established Church of Scotland ; — yet none of these Ministers ever said so, and I believe never thought so : Yea, as I hinted before, they wou’d rejoice to see Thousands for One really converted, and that the Gathering of the People were indeed unto Shiloh (a).*”

He also admits,

That Persons, when converted, may remain in the established Church, and be so far deluded, at least for a Time, as not to join the Secession.

“*I may add further, says he, that their Charity (meaning the Ministers of the Secession) is not so narrow, but that they think that MANY are in the established Church, and carried off with the Delusion of the Day, who were formerly, and consequently still are, gracious Persons ; whose Eyes the Lord may yet open in his Time.*” *It is scarce needful to observe, as Allowances are here made for Christians of some Standing, who have not yet joined the Secession, That the Subjects* of

^a When the Reader comes to p. 10. of this Letter, he will see that Mr. Webster does not insinuate artfully, but plainly tells, what has been charged on the Gentlemen of the Secession ; and at the same Time declares, that he would not think so unworthily of them, till they said so in express Words. He is highly pleased with finding there was no Ground for the Assertion, and hopes this Acknowledgment of Mr. Fisher’s will not be retracted.

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of the present Work in the West have in this respect a juster Claim to the Associate Brethrens Charity;—because, their spiritual Fathers not thinking it Duty to separate from the established Church, it must require Time and serious Reflection ere the spiritual Children can see through the Delusion:—They ought certainly not rashly to give up with such, whose Ministry God has so remarkably blest as the Instrument of their Conversion. And besides, as afterwards shown, the Seceders have laid a particular Stumbling-block in the Way of these young Converts, by charging them as under diabolical Possessions, &c. which can't fail to beget Prejudices not soon removed.—I may add, That it will not be pretended that the distinguishing Points of the Secession ought to be the first and chief Care of a Soul just now brought under alarming Apprehensions of Divine Wrath, or when but beginning to be religious (b). Mr. Fisher's charitable Sentiments of those who have not Freedom to join with the Testimony of the Associate Presbytery, may be farther learned from his Answer to the following Question, proposed to them by a late Writer, "Dare any of you say,—that the judging your Testimony irregular, and what the Lord required not at your Hands in the Way and Manner you have given it, and their close Conjunction with their Ministers, are certain Evidences that they are christless and graceless who do so?" Mr. Fisher replies, p. 54. "If some Persons had not better Evidences of their being in a State of Grace than their judging the Testimony we were honoured to give to be irregular, and their close Conjunction with their Ministers, who are carrying on a Course of Defection; it would be no great Breach of Charity to say, that they are christless and graceless who do so." This Answer, strange and evasive as it is, needs no Commentary to shew that Mr. Fisher is not yet so hardy as to make an Approbation of their Acts and Testimony essential to a State of Grace, or the remaining in the established Church inconsistent with a real Work of Conversion.

Let

b P. 25. of this Letter. c See p. 25. of this Letter.

Let it be again observed,

That Mr. Fisher has offered nothing to prove, that the outward Effects upon the Body, wherewith this Work is attended in some of its Subjects, are inconsistent with a Work of the Spirit of God.

This is what Mr. Fisher must prove, or he says nothing to the Purpose.— For we don't build on unusual Symptoms,— or pretend that Persons so affected must of Consequence be savingly wrought upon; — but only plead that they are not incompatible with saving Operations upon the Mind^d. Mr. Fisher, when asked by Mr. Robe if he would say these Things were inconsistent, answers, p. 62. “ I have already shown from Mr. Edwards, that the Rise of these bodily Agitations and Agonies is not only Antiscriptural, but Diabolical: And therefore every sound Divine must maintain, in these Circumstances, that they are inconsistent with a saving Work of the Spirit of God at the Time; — tho' I don't refuse that some such Persons may afterwards be the Subjects of the Spirit's gracious Operations.” — It is of little Consequence to notice the Phrase that he uses of bodily Agonies and Agitations; that he might point them out, however unfairly, as resembling the agitating Camissars.— This is the second Instance we have had Occasion to observe of Mr. Fisher's Talent at answering Questions. He seems to me indeed either very unhappy in his Expression, or very unwilling to speak plainly; but, if I understand him aright, he does not here maintain that bodily Distress is inconsistent with a saving Work of the Spirit of God.— I am the more confirmed in this Opinion, from his allowing, p. 27. that at Irvine, in 1625, “ Many Persons were so choked and taken by the Heart, that thro' Terror, the Spirit in such a Measure convincing them of Sin in hearing the Word,— they have been
“ made

"made to fall over, and thus carried out of the Church,
 "who afterward proved most solid and lively Christians."
 He admits falling over in hearing the Word in some Circumstances; but says, contrary to Fact, that Multitudes in the present Case fall over without hearing a Word spoken or brought to their Remembrance *. I apprehend then, as just now observed, that, in Answer to Mr. Robe's Question, he does not maintain that bodily Distress is inconsistent with a saving Work of the Spirit of God; — but that seeing "he has shewn from Mr. Edwards, that
 "the Rise of these bodily Agonies and Agitations is not
 "only Antiscriptural but Diabolical, therefore every
 "sound Divine must maintain in these Circumstances," (viz. when the Rise of them has been shewn to be Antiscriptural and Diabolical) "that they are inconsistent with
 "a saving Work of the Spirit of God at the Time." I don't know but that Satan, as he was allowed to inflict painful Diseases upon the Body of an upright Job, may still in SOME Cases be permitted to affect their Bodies, in whose Soul God may have begun a saving Work, and at the Time thereof. But, allowing Mr. Fisher's Inference to be just, it will be proper to enquire, By what Medium he proves from Mr. Edwards, that the RISE of the bodily Distress of the People in New-England is Antiscriptural and Diabolical? For Proof of this, Mr. Fisher alledges, p. 13. "Mr. Edwards having acknowledged that this Work is begun by Representations of
 "dreadful Objects upon the Imagination;" and makes Mr. Edwards mean also to say, "That the People in
 "New-England have a lively sensible Representation carried in upon their Imagination of material Flames,
 "which they apprehend to be the Flames of Hell-fire." — It will perhaps surprise the Reader, not acquainted with Mr. Fisher's Way of doing, to be told, that the above Assertions have no other Foundation than the following Expressions of Mr. Edwards concerning some in the Extremity of their Distress; — "Very often they have a lively
 "Idea of the horrible Pit of eternal Misery; — God appearing

* See marginal Note, p. 40, of this Letter,

“ *pearing to them so much provoked, they are apprehensive of great Danger that God will send them down to the dreadful Pit they have in View. And again, very many, in the Midst of their Extremity, have been brought to an extraordinary Sense of their fully deserving that Wrath and Destruction which is then before their Eyes*.”

To wrest these or the like Expressions found in the most accurate judicious Writers, into a sensible Representation of material Flames, or of Hell-fire, is no Evidence of Mr. Fisher's Knowledge or Ingenuity; but to go farther, and thence publish to the World, that Mr. Edwards acknowledges, “ *That this Work is begun by such Representations of dreadful Objects upon the Imagination,*” and so to infer that the Rise thereof must be diabolical, is still more hard to reconcile with the Candour of a Minister of the Gospel: For as Mr. Edwards is not speaking of the Rise of this Work in the fore-cited Paragraph, but what happens to some in the Midst of their Extremity, and is far from making such an Acknowledgment; so he directly maintains the contrary in the preceeding Page of his Sermon.

“ *Those, in whom have been these uncommon Appearances, have been of two Sorts: Either those that have been in great Distress, in an Apprehension of their Sin and Misery; or those that have been overcome with a sweet Sense of the Greatness, Wonderfulness, and Excellency of Divine Things. Of the Multitude of those of the former Sort, that I have had Opportunity to observe, and have been*”

“ *acquain-*”

† I have presented the Reader with these Phrases joined together, that he might judge if, when thus placed in the strongest Light, the Author intends any Thing more than a lively spiritual Discovery; which those awakened Sinners have had of their Danger, in the Light of Revelation; and if Mr. Fisher's Invention is not extremely good, when he finds out here a *sensible Representation of material Flames*. But if any will turn over to the whole Passage of Mr. Edwards, p. 48. London Edition, p. 54. Edinburgh Edition, he will find the above Phrases intermixed with many others, which put it beyond all Question that we have here given the true Sense of the Author,

“acquainted with, there have been very few, but
 “that, by all that could be observed in them, in the
 “Time of it, or afterwards, their Distress (N: B.)
 “has arisen from real, proper Conviction, and a being
 “in a Degree sensible of that which was the Truth.”

’Tis truly amazing, when Mr. Edwards here asserts
 in Words not to be mistaken, that their Distress, which
 has been attended with uncommon Appearances, had
 its Rise from real proper Convictions, and a being sen-
 sible of Truth;—that Mr. Fisher should say, Mr.
 Edwards acknowledges this Work is begun, by Repre-
 sentations of dreadful Objects upon the Imagination,—
 a sensible Representation of material Flames, which
 they apprehend to be the Flames of Hell-fire; and that
 the visionary Representation, &c. Truth is too sacred
 a Thing to be thus treated, and might have expected
 better Quarter from one accustomed to speak from the
 Chair of Verity.—But it seems the Cause he is at pre-
 sent obliged to support, lays him open to manifold
 Temptations.—And indeed this is but one of the many
 Places where Messieurs Edwards, Robe and others
 have been so treated; which a small Degree of Phi-
 losophy, and the Half of Mr. Fisher’s professed Inge-
 nuity, might have prevented.

To return: Let us suppose, that Mr. Edwards
 had said any Thing from which it might justly
 have been inferr’d, that the Rise of the bodily Di-
 stress of a few in New-England was Antiscriptu-
 ral and Diabolical; How does this conclude a-
 gainst others in New-England? And by what logi-
 cal Rule doth it conclude against the Subjects of the
 present Work, who give a most scriptural, rational
 Account of the Origine of their bodily Distress, as
 flowing from a quick and affecting Sense of Divine
 Wrath, not occasioned by any visionary or sensible Re-
 presentation, but through Means of the Word of God
 in the Hand of the Spirit, convincing them of their

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Guilt and Misery ^s? — But says Mr. Fisher, It is granted that the Work at home is similar to the Work abroad. True, this has been granted as to the great Lines; but, must therefore every Expression of a Writer in Defence of the Work abroad (explained contrary to the Opinion of those who allowed of a Resemblance betwixt the two Cases) be the Rule by which the Subjects of this Work at home are to be tried, and that too in direct Contradiction to their own Testimony? This indeed is a side and easy Way of overthrowing all Evidence, hitherto I believe unknown ^h.

If Mr. Fisher has a mind to reason against the Origine of the Work in question, it is expected he will not again have Recourse to New-England, or a false Interpretation of Mr. Edwards' Sermon. The Account on which we build, lies plainly before him, p. 4, &c. of the following Letter; and until he shall think proper to shew from the Fact as there stated, that the Spring whence the uncommon Circumstances flow is Antiscipitural and Diabolical, he will suffer me again to say, — That he has offered nothing to prove that the outward Effects upon the Body, wherewith this Work is attended in some of its Subjects, are inconsistent with a Work of the Spirit of God. — For he cannot reasonably expect that his bare Assertions, p. 25. not so very consistent with what he elsewhere allows, — will pass for Proof with such as can't help thinking he is far from being

^s P. 4. of this Letter.

^h Taking it for granted, that Mr. Edwards had acknowledged that this Work is begun in SOME by Representations of dreadful Objects, such as material Flames: Mr. Fisher's Argument proceeds thus; Therefore its Rise in them must be diabolical, consequently its Origine must also be diabolical in ALL others in New-England, even those who, according to Mr. Edwards express Words, have no such sensible Representations. And of Course the Rise of the Work here must likewise be diabolical and antiscipitural, notwithstanding the Subjects of it account for their outward Distress as proceeding from inward Convictions, thro' Means of the Word of God in the Hand of the Spirit, without visionary Representations. Is not this a curious and fine Chain of Reasoning?

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being infallible.— Further, it deserves particular Notice, that Mr. Fisher does not pretend to deny,

That Persons whose Distress of Mind affects their Bodies, or who go the length of Crying out, bear but small Proportion to the much greater Numbers, who are wrought upon in a more kindly and usual Way, and about whom nothing has appeared but what is common in other Cases, when People have been awak'd to a serious Concern about Religion.

This is asserted in express Words, p. 29. of the following Letter, and by all the Writers on the same Side of the Question, and indeed is so notour that it will admit of no Dispute; and yet, while it remains true, the Work of Cambuslang, Kilsyth, &c. must be allowed to be a Work of the Spirit of God, whatever Judgments we form of such whose Concern is attended with unusual Symptoms.— Suppose them, if you will, Enthusiastical, under the Power of Delusion, infernal Agency, and what not? this can never weaken the Argument, as afterwards observed, for the Genuineness of this Work with respect to others, not under like bodily Impressions. — It will not be pretended that God cannot be carrying on his Work in a Church, if Satan be permitted to harass or carry off any by his Delusions: On the contrary, the Author of the Fulfilling of the Scriptures lays it down, in a Passage cited by Mr. Fisherⁱ, as a general Rule, That, “wherever in any of the Churches the Lord “has had some special Work on Foot, and the Interest of the Gospel gaining Ground, Satan there “hath followed the same remarkably with some close “and subtile Assault, in bringing forth something

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“ of

*“ of his Work in Resemblance thereto, to beget Pre-
 “ judices against the Way of Truth ;” and gives for
 Instance what happened in Lochlearn, &c. “ upon
 “ several ignorant Persons, who in the Midst of ‘Pu-
 “ blick Worship fell a Breathing and Panting, as
 “ those who had run long with strange Pangs like
 “ Convulsions ^k.”*

*The Opposers of the present Work are aware, that
 there is no Reasoning from those under bodily Im-
 pressions, against such who are not thus affected ; and
 therefore continually insist upon some uncommon Cir-
 cumstances, as if these took Place in all: Whereas the Ob-
 jection, trifling as it is, militates only against a
 FEW, in Comparison of the MANY about whom
 nothing unusual appears. And now we would observe
 once more,*

*That Mr. Fisher does not so much as at-
 tempt to disprove the Facts upon which
 a charitable Opinion of the Genuineness
 of this Work is founded.*

*One main Fact respects the Account which the Sub-
 jects thereof give of their inward Attainments, and the
 various Springs whence their Conviction or Consola-
 tion flows. This stands confirmed by the Testimony of
 many competent Judges ^l, Men of known Veracity,
 who*

^k See this Passage fully cited and considered, p. 43. of this Letter.

^l The Reverend Messieurs M'Culloch at Cambuslang, Willison of Dundee, Connel in Kilbride, John Hamilton in the Barony of Glasgow, William Hamilton at Botkewell, William Hamilton in Douglas, M'Night at Irvine, M'Laurine at Glasgow, Robt at Kilsyth, Gillespie at Carnock, &c. These Ministers only are mentioned, because they have published their Attestations as to the Genuineness of this Work from particular Knowledge, being Eye and Ear Witnesses.--- Several Preachers and others have likewise in a publick Manner attested the Facts referred to ;--- and besides great Numbers, and not a few Ministers, that have not yet appeared in Print, might be condescended on as Witnesses of what we here assert.

who publish these Accounts from the Mouths of Persons themselves.— Another principal Fact relates to the Effects flowing from these Operations upon their Minds: This again is supported by the joint Testimony of their respective Ministers, and those who have best Access to the nearest View of their whole Conduct. So that we have here all the Evidence which the Nature of the Thing will admit; — Evidence not to be shaken, without giving up with moral Proof altogether. Mr. Fisher therefore judged well, to pass this in Silence, knowing that flying Reports, Stories told by Persons we don't know who, or where, May-bees and Possibilities, his usual Method of Reasoning, would not serve his Purpose.— From all these Observations, taken together, it will appear, — That the Point in Debate is brought to this one Question; —

Whether or not, from the Facts alledged, proved, and not disputed, there be Ground to conclude, in the Judgment of Charity, that many Persons in the West, lately brought under Soul-concern, are become real Christians or truly converted? —

I take it for granted, that there are Rules by which we may form a charitable Judgment as to the State of others; — and that as we can't judge Mens Hearts but by their outward Actions, — or canvass the secret Springs of their Conduct, — 'tis by their Fruits we are to know them. — If the Fruit is good, we are to suppose the Tree good; — If Faith shows itself by Works, we are to admit that 'tis living and true Faith. — This is founded on infallible Testimony^m, and to this Mr. Fisher agreesⁿ. If, besides these external Fruits, the Persons on whom the visible Change is wrought, account for

^m Mat. vii. 15. — 20. Jam. ii. 18, 20.

ⁿ Pages 8, 20. of his Review.

for it agreeably to the Law and the Testimony, and the Experience of other Christians, we have still farther Evidence of real Conversion; and the two together amount to the utmost possible Proof which one Man can give to another: ---- So far there can be no Dispute. It remains then that we apply these Rules to the present Case.

The Account which the Subjects of this Work give us to their inward Exercise and Attainments, — in their Rise and Progress, you have narrated, — p. 4, 5. of this Letter, where you will see them brought to a Sense of Sin and Misery, Danger and Ruin, thro' Means of the preached Word; — deeply affected with Sin, as dishonouring to a kind and loving Saviour; — pricked to the Heart with Unbelief; — breathing after an Interest in Jesus, — in all his Offices and all his Relations; — and at length happily determined to believe on him, as held forth in the Gospel-promise, for all their Salvation and all their Desire. In this Manner do they account for their Work of Conviction and Consolation: — How far it agrees with the Experience of the Saints, let the Christian Reader judge, by comparing this Account with what has passed in his own Breast; how far it is scriptural, let him try, by bringing every Part thereof to the Standard of God's Word. Mr. Fisher has not thought proper to give his Opinion upon this Part of the Evidence.

As to the Fruits flowing from these inward Attainments, you have a few of them mentioned, p. 6, 7, 24, &c. where you will find, — That their Faith shews itself by Works; — daily ripens into Action; — worketh by Love; — and is become a living Spring of new Obedience, — making them esteem all God's Precepts concerning all Things to be right, — and to hate every false Way; — reforming their Lives, and moulding their whole Conduct into a Walk and Conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, — &c. &c. These Fruits of their Faith, afterwards enumerate at much greater Length in the Pages referred to, 'tis humbly thought, plainly

plainly enough evidence themselves to be the genuine Fruits of the Spirit of God, and consequently lay a charitable Foundation for believing that a real saving Change is wrought in such Persons, — and that they are become new Creatures, when thus walking in Newness of Life. — However, notwithstanding this Change accounted for by the happy Persons according to the Scriptures, and also shining forth in all-holy Conversation and Godliness, — Mr. Fisher is pleased to say, p. 24. after admitting that Persons within the established Church may be in a State of Grace, — “ But then the incontestible Evidences of Conversion, as enumerate either by the Narrative, or by Mr. Edwards, or by Mr. Webster, falling far short of the distinguishing Marks of a saving Work of the Spirit of God ; — Persons that have no other Evidences, whether such as have been under the severest bodily Distress, or such as have had none of these bodily Seizures, — they may exactly correspond to one another, as Face answereth Face in a Glass, and yet be both under a gross Delusion. For my Part, I should think myself unfaithful to my Trust as a Minister, if I made People depend solely upon such Evidences of Conversion as I find insisted upon by the ‘Promoters of this Work.’”

Happy will it be for Mr. Fisher, if found unfaithful in no other Respect ! It was easy for him to have brought the Point to a short Issue, — by condescending on the Evidences whence one may conclude favourably of the State of others, — or to have pointed out what Marks in the present Case are wanting, which forbid our charitable Judgment : — Here is deep Silence. — He desires indeed some Scriptures to be considered. After reading them, I am at a Loss to conjecture what he intends. — If from Ezra and others mourning over the unlawful Marriages of some of the People with Strangers, — and from the Psalmist’s Confession,

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° The Scriptures are, Ezra ix. 6. to the Close. Psal. cvi. 6, 7, &c. Ezek. ix. 4. Rom. vii. 21, 23, 24.

We have sinned with our Fathers,—*together with the Lord's Command in Ezekiel to the Man with the Writer's Inkborn*, to set a Mark upon the Foreheads of the Men that sigh and cry for all the Abominations that be done in the Midst of the City ;— *If from these Scriptures he would teach that we are to be concerned for the Sins of others, even the Iniquities of our Forefathers, and would at the same Time insinuate that the People in the West have no such Concern on their Spirits,—he will find himself contradicted by as many as join with them in their publick Ministrations and their more private Societies.—Not to speak of what passes on Days of solemn Humiliation and Prayer,—When do Messieurs M'Culloch and Robe, &c. appear before the Lord as the Mouth of the Congregation, without humbly confessing that we with our Fathers have sinned, and deeply lamenting the growing Impiety of the Age? —Is it not expressly said in the following Letter, that the Subjects of this Work have an affecting Sense of Sin, not only as the Ruin of the Creature, but as dishonouring to a kind and loving Saviour? And every one knows, that the necessary Consequence of such Views are Grief and Sorrow for Sin, in whomever it appears.—Nay, we find them so pained for the Iniquity and wretched State of others, as to use their utmost Endeavours within their proper Sphere, that ALL Ranks may be brought humbly to acknowledge their Iniquities and submit to the Righteousness of Christ^p. In a Word, if we form just Conclusions from their professed Concern for Christ's Interest, and seeming Love to the dear Redeemer, we must allow that Rivers of Water run down their Eyes because Men transgress the Divine Law ;—and that it would not be easy to say what are their anxious Cries and Tears in the Presence of the God of all Grace, because they dwell among a People of unclean Lips.—But, if Mr. Fisher would insinuate that they have made no such Acknowledgment as their former Ini-*

Iniquities and present high Privileges call for, this I believe they will readily own; but neither have the many others in the Church of Scotland,—whom notwithstanding he allows to be in a gracious State. So that still there is no essential Mark wanting. I suppose, from Paul's Conflict with a Body of Sin and Death, Mr. Fisher would have the Reader infer, that the Subjects of this Work, who 'tis believed are in a hopeful Way,—have no such Sense or Concern because of remaining Corruption. He will therefore suffer me to remark, that the Narrative particularly speaks of “their Grief when vain Thoughts fill their Mind, and “Restlessness till they recover their former Spirituality”; and that, after all their Attainments, “they “are still deeply sensible of the Remains of Evil “that cleave to them and others in this imperfect “State.” Mr. Fisher's farther Reference to the Psalmist's Account of the Children of Israel, respects their feigned Repentance; and there may no Doubt be a seeming Reformation which is not thorough or lasting. Of this by and by. Thus far concerning the Scriptures pointed out to our Consideration. Mr. Fisher being asked,—“If the Associate Presbytery would “tell the most zealous for their Testimony, and against their own Ministers, that these Things are “Marks and Evidences of saving Grace?” answers, p. 54. in his own mysterious shuffling Way,—“Not to “insist upon the Invektive of calling it our Testimony, “I dare tell every one, that a zealous Concern for a “publick Testimony to the Kingly Office of Christ, and “the Privileges of his Kingdom, is among the distinguishing Evidences of saving Grace which we “find all the Saints in Scripture had, every one of “them, being zealous for the Testimony of their Day.” After having allowed many Saints to be within the established Church of Scotland, and other Concessions already noticed,—doubtless he can't mean that it is an essential Mark of saving Grace to join with the Sece-

ding Presbytery,— which if amissing, a Man's Christianity is to be called in question, every other Evidence notwithstanding. I must then suppose, that, in a Consistency with himself, he means that those who are really converted will have a Concern for the Welfare of Zion, and the publick Interest of Christ's Kingdom.— In this we are agreed^f; and Mr. Fisher, instead of asserting, p. 53. without any Pretext whatever, That an Aver- sion to publick Acts and Testimonies for the declarative Glory of God takes place at present in these Mr. Webster is pleading for; — he should have remembred, that, among other Evidences of their Conversion, this is particularly noticed,— “ That they breathe after
 “ Jesus under every Character, and in every Rela-
 “ tion; as a King upon his Throne, clothed with Au-
 “ thority to reign, as well as a Priest on the Cross,
 “ endowed with Ability to save^t. That their Souls
 “ burn with Love to God, and Desire to promote his
 “ Interest in a World, &c. ”

I don't see that Mr. Fisher has offered any other Remarks for weakning the Evidence now in question,— but a positive Assertion, p. 40. That amongst the Camissars were to be found “ all the same pretended
 “ Evidences of a Work of God, and as solemn a Re-
 “ nunciation of the Devil as having any Share in it.—
 “ For a Proof of this, continues he, let us compare
 “ the Evidences that Mr. Webster gives of Divine
 “ Influence as the true Spring of the extraordinary
 “ Work here, with the Evidences which Sir Richard
 “ Buckley and Mr. Lacy give of the Communications
 “ of the sanctifying Grace of God to the Souls of the
 “ Camissars, and we will find that they exactly hit,
 “ as Face answereth to Face in a Glass^x. ” To make his Word good, he omits the whole Evidence I have brought from the rational scriptural Account, answerable to the Experience of the Saints, which the Sub-
 jects

^f P. 24. of this Letter. ^t Ibid. p. 4. ^u Ibid. p. 7,---24.

^x To prove this, he cites Faithful Account of the French Pro- phets, p. 22, 42. and my Letter, p. 7, 8.

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jects of this Work give of its Rise and Progress in their Souls ; ——— and in running the Parallel betwixt the alledged good Effects amongst the Camissars, and the Fruits here condescended on, — he passes over almost every other Sentence contained in the Place he pretends to cite : — And, finding even this would not do, he has Recourse to halving of Sentences ; so that out of 26 Lines he presents the Reader only with 10, curtailed at Pleasure^r. — And having by this happy

y I can't omit this Opportunity of giving the Reader a Specimen of Mr. *Fisher's* Manner of quoting the Writings which he opposes. " Let us see (*says he*) how Mr. *Webster* proves that Divine Influence is the true Spring of the extraordinary Work at *Cambuslang*, p. 7, 8." The whole Passage is as follows; I have inclosed the Places, and put them in different Characters, which Mr. *Fisher* passes over.

" But you'll readily ask, What Fruit have these Things? Does their Faith work by Love? (*Does it shew itself by Works?*)
 " Yes, my Friend, and that too in a most remarkable Manner.
 " Their Faith daily ripens into Action, (*and, to the Conviction of those who know them best, is a living Spring of new Obedience.*)
 " They esteem all God's Precepts concerning all Things to be right, (*and hate every false Way.*) The Lives of the Profane are visibly reformed; Relative Duties conscientiously discharged, (*where were the most culpable Neglects;*) The high Praises of God employ the Tongue of Blasphemers; (*Harmony and Peace succeed Strife and Contention;* Families, once the Synagogues of Satan, are become Temples where God is worshipped and adored; Persons of all Ages form themselves into little Societies for religious Discourse and Prayer.) Praise is perfected out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings; grosser Sinners profess the greatest Remorse for Acts of Injustice, (*and don't fail to make Restitution, even where the Injury might have remained hid till Time is no more, and where such Returns bear hard on their Circumstances.*)
 " Never did any Converts appear indowed with more of a truly Christian Spirit. Their Souls burn with Love to God, (*and Desire to promote his Interest in a World; with Love to Jesus,*) to one another, and to all that bear the Divine Image. They cheerfully forgive their Enemies; and wish well to their Fellow-creatures. (*How great their Concern for the Salvation of Mankind, let their Works declare; Works, whatever some have falsely reported, confined within the proper Sphere of private Christians.*")

It is easy to observe the Reason of thus mangling the above Paragraph: It served not only to make the Resemblance betwixt the Camissars, and the Subjects of this Work, answer as Face to Face in a Glass; but was well calculate for other Purposes. For

happy Stratagem, and the grand Omission above-noticed, which would equally well reconcile Socinus and Calvin, — stated the two Accounts, and shewn that the Case of the Camissars resembles the present as Face answereth to Face in a Glass, — he concludes, p. 43. “Therefore, since it is owned by A L L, that the Camissars, notwithstanding of all their pretended Evidences of a Divine Influence, were under a manifest Delusion, it follows, that the People here, for whom no better Evidence can be produced, MUST be under the same, till it please the Lord to give them a Discovery of their Mistake, which I hope and wish he will do in his Time.”

This Preface having already swelled beyond the designed Bounds, — I leave it intirely with the Reader to judge for himself, by comparing the whole History of the French Prophets with the following Letter, if Mr. Fisher could have gone farther from Truth, than when he says, p. 42. “That the Evidence of a Divine Influence is as strong for the Camissars as for the Subjects of this extraordinary Work in the West of Scotland.” — And I shall likewise allow that A L L of them were under a Delusion, and that, notwithstanding their seeming Reformation, A L L of them returned again to Folly; — and yet every one of these Particulars might be justly question’d: — But, granting the whole, what follows? — Why, says Mr. Fisher, that the People in the West, where the pretended Effects are the same, must also be under a Delusion. — Here I beg leave intirely to differ from him. — Had he said, may-be under a Delusion, — his Inference wou’d have flow’d from the Concessions now made for Argument’s Sake; but that they MUST, stands no how supported, even after all that has been granted.

In

Instance, Had he taken Notice of their Love to Jesus, and Desire to promote the Interest of God in the World; here would been a Confutation of what he alledges, that they are not concerned for the Declarative Glory of God,

In a Word, we plead that we have, with respect to vast Numbers of the Subjects of the present Work, ALL the Evidence of gracious Operations by which one Man can judge the State of another, and that Mr. Fisher has not pointed out any one essential Mark that is amissing: And therefore, suppose he could instance (which I must be allowed to think impossible) any given Number in any Age of the Christian Church, call them Camissars or what you will, in whom there appeared the same Evidences of a genuine Work of the Spirit of God, — and that yet the Event shewed, from their all returning to Folly, that it was not saving or real; — there could nothing more be inferred, than that Men to Appearance may be real Christians, while in Fact only nominal Christians, having a Form of Godliness, destitute of its Power. — But does it thence follow, that there are no true Converts, or that we must not in the Judgment of Charity think well of any Man; — and that, because some, once seemingly in the Way to Heaven, have drawn back into Perdition, we may say of others, still holding on in the Paths of Truth and Righteousness, that they are also under a Delusion, and must fall short of the heavenly Felicity? — Put the Case of a Man to Appearance just what Mr. Fisher would have him to be, — a Member of the Associate Presbytery, or one of their Adherents, openly and avowedly contending for what they reckon Truth; — still this Man, seeming to be something, might have only a vain Shew. — Paul supposes one may carry a Profession so far as to resist unto Blood, and give his Body to be burned, while still destitute of Divine Love in his Soul. — But Mr. Fisher will not from thence infer, if such a Man should fall away, that all the Associate Presbytery and their Adherents must be under a Delusion, and will also apostatize. And of Consequence he ought with us again to conclude, Allowing that the Camissars, or any Sect you will, did for a little seemingly bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit,
and

and that After-experience proved their Goodness to be only as the Morning-cloud and early Dew that soon passeth away ; nay, as observed, p. 8. of this Letter, that should it happen (which I pray God may not be the Case) that several Subjects of the present Work, who seemed to have started fair, shall stop short in the Christian Course, their Impressions being but transient ;—it can no more be reasonably objected against the Sincerity of others, than the passing Convictions of a Felix will prove that never any were truly converted under Paul's Ministry, or that there are no real Christians in the World, because many have a Name to live and are dead.— Judas, seemingly not behind the other Apostles, betrayed his Lord and Master ; and yet the rest sealed the Testimony of Jesus with their Blood.

Upon the whole, We desire to be deeply affected with the Degeneracy of the Age, and the too visible Breaches upon our once happy Constitution both in Church and State.— We would wish to ly low in the Dust, because that we with our Fathers have sinned ; and to promote, as God enables and gives Opportunity, the Work of Righteousness which shall be Peace, and the Effect thereof Quietness and Assurance for ever: But cannot be of Opinion, that 'tis the Way to revive decayed Religion, and reform a backsliding People ; to despise the Outpouring of the Spirit, which alone can make our barren Wilderness become a fruitful Field : And should rather think it a better Method to accomplish the long-looked-for Reformation, to join the several Congregations for whom God has done great Things, in admiring the Operations of his Hands ;—depending upon him, with whom is the Residue of the Spirit, in the Way of Duty and fervent Prayer, for a more general and plentiful Effusion of the Holy Ghost.— And shall only add, That seeing Mr. Fisher allows, notwithstanding the Defections of the Church,— Men may be converted within the Pale thereof,— and does not insist upon joining the Secession as an essential Mark

of

of true Conversion; seeing 'tis further evident, that he has offered nothing to prove, that bodily Distress is inconsistent with a saving Work of the Spirit of God,--- and, if in this Opinion, does not deny what indeed is beyond Dispute, that the Objection respects only some, not ALL the Subjects of this Work, MANY having never been so affected; and lastly, as there are Rules by which we may form a charitable Judgment concerning the State of others, so the Facts, upon which our favourable Opinion in the present Case depends, being uncontroverted;--- it only remains, if Mr. Fisher still continues his Opposition, and designs not to rail, but reason, That he lay down in plain Words the Marks (in Consistency with the above Particulars now out of the Question) whence we may try the State of others, and that he bring the Subjects of the present Work to this Touchstone.—But if, in place thereof, he again entertain us with the Defections of the Church,--- the high Regard due to the Secession,--- the boundless Toleration-principles of the Promoters of this Work,--- the unusual Symptoms attending this Dispensation of the Grace of God in a FEW (overlooking the far greater Number not so affected)--- the pretended philosophical Errors in Mr. Edwards' Sermon, and the sensible Representation of material Flames, whence, it is most unwarrantably supposed, the Work in New-England flows; or favour us only with idle Stories as to what passed betwixt Mr. Whitefield and the Associate Presbytery in private,--- his having sworn the Oath of Supremacy, &c. which the Seceding Brethren knew extremely well, when blessing God for the Success of his Ministry:--- If these are the Subject of next Review,--- it will indeed be a proper Way to remain unanswered, and to save the Reader any farther Trouble.--- For suppose him to succeed in proving every one of these Points,-- a tolerably difficult Task too; yet the Work of Cambuslang, &c. may nevertheless proceed from Divine Influence, and continue a standing Proof that our God

God is come suddenly into his Temple, by a glorious Ministration of his Spirit.

Mr. Fisher could run no great Hazard in remarking upon my Letter ; but seems not to have judged so well in entering the Lists with Messieurs Edwards, Robe, &c. I dread, on his Account, the Issue of the Contest ; and cannot but lament over him, in the Words of the Poet,

Infelix puer, atque impar congressus Achilli.

The present Divine Operations are called new and unprecedented : And indeed it must be owned, that very new and unprecedented Methods have been followed by some who are of this Opinion ; concerning which, I should have made several Observations, did the Limits of this Preface permit. Let it suffice to caution against applying what is said from behind the Curtain, concerning certain Extravagances in New-England, to this blessed Work at home, where no such Extravagances can be alledged.—'Tis true, that an anonymous Author may narrate Fact, refer to the Attestation of others for Proof, and reason upon the whole ; and his Arguments are to have the same Weight as when introduced with the greatest Names and highest Titles : But in a bare Representation of Facts, and that too in Opposition to what is vouched by Men of known Veracity, Judgment and Character ; no Man can in these Circumstances expect Credit, while refusing his Subscription, and the Publick an Opportunity of examining his Character and Grounds of Knowledge.— And it would be still more surprising, if he was credited, when his Writings are not even openly attested by any of his personal Acquaintance.— This makes me think my Reverend Friend Mr. George Wishart has had a great deal too much Goodness to lend his Name, upon the Word of others, to the Letter of one whom he never saw, having never been in this Part of the World ; when the Letter-writer himself,

and

To the READER.

xxx

and his Vouchers, have all thought proper to screen themselves, in the Dark.—I should have imagined this not so safe, because Mr. Wishart's Authors have doubtless misinformed him, as to the Gentleman's Character, in a very momentuous Point, I mean, Candour and Charity. Tho' he talks much of this excellent Grace, and laments that Spirit of bitter, censorious and uncharitable Judging, which he alledges Mr. Whitefield has raised; yet he assumes to himself the Prerogative of the Searcher of Hearts, in order to put a bad Construction on such who differ from him. Thus he styly insinuates, that the Ministers of Boston thought no better of Mr. Whitefield than they did elsewhere; but acted as if they had a great Veneration for him, from Cowardice, Affectation of Popularity, or other such like undue Motives, or from a rigid Attachment to some Sentiments in Divinity. Considering Mr. Wishart's Observation in the Preface, I should have been satisfied the Gentleman had been more particular what Sentiments in Divinity he has here an Eye to^b.—Equally candid is the Conjecture, p. 13. "Some are in the Thought, that it may be too common for those zealous in the new Way, to cry out themselves, on purpose to move others, and bring forward a general 'Scream!'" 'Tis still more uncharitable to ascribe (p. 20.) Mr. Tennent's Sentiments, which he expresses in a Letter to the Reverend Mr. Dickinson of the
Jerseys

^b The Letter-writer's own Words are, "Whether the Ministers here (meaning Boston) in general, really thought better of him than they did elsewhere, I will not be too positive to affirm. 'Tis possible, they might act as tho' they had a great Veneration for him, and so as to lead People in to such an Apprehension, from Cowardice, Affectation of Popularity, or a rigid Attachment to some Sentiments in Divinity they might imagine there was now an Advantage to establish and propagate. And I would not undertake to prove, that they might none of them be under an undue Influence from some or other of these Motives." Letter from a Gentleman in Boston to Mr. George Wishart one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, concerning the State of Religion in New-England, P. 7.

Jerseys (*breathing nothing but Humility and Willingness to acknowledge what he had done amiss*) to so low a Motive as Uneasiness at the Esteem the Moravians were gaining among some of his People. Can such harsh Constructions as these, proceed from that Charity which thinketh no Evil?

'Tis no Wonder, that Mr. Wihart's Goodness of Temper should not have adverted to these and many other Particulars; especially after having, from the Recommendation of Friends, imbibed so favourable an Opinion of the anonymous Letter-writer: But the internal Evidence, adduced from the Letter itself, must necessarily lessen his Credit with those that have not the same Opportunity of his Correspondence, and the like Knowledge of such as witness for him.— However, taking the Letter as it is, and all the Accounts from those in Opposition to the Work in New-England, now tack'd together in a Volume^c; what do they amount to, but that, while much Good was doing in New-England Satan mixed in his Tares; and that, with a remarkable Work of God's Grace in Numbers there appeared also a Spirit of Enthusiasm in many others^d? And has not this been the Case, in a less or greater Degree, amidst all extraordinary Outpouring of the Spirit.

I have an undoubted good Opinion of Mr. Wihart's Ingenuity; and therefore can readily believe, he thought himself obliged to communicate the Boston Letter to the World, in Justice to the Cause of Truth and that he has been the rather induced to this, to prevent the like Extravagances from ever prevailing with us under a Name of Religion. And I am persuaded he is so charitable as to judge, that I have thought myself obliged to make the above Remarks, in Justice to the Cause of Truth, and to prevent any from fancy

^c This relates to a Pamphlet lately published at Glasgow, intitled, *The State of Religion in New-England, &c. since the Arrival of Mr George Whitefield there.*

^d See Letter to Mr. Wihart, P. 9, 21. and P. 46, of this Letter.

ing that the like Extravagances already prevail with us, under the Name of Religion. And

We will certainly both join in exhorting (as Mr. Edwards does the People in New-England) such as are Friends of the Divine Work amongst us, and have been Partakers of it, or are zealous to promote the same, to give diligent Heed to themselves, to avoid all Errors and Misconduct, and whatever may darken and obscure its genuine Lustre; and so to watch over their whole Behaviour, in a Dependence on Divine Grace, as that they of the contrary Part may be ashamed, having no Evil to say of them ||.

We would particularly beseech those that are converted, to strengthen their Brethren, and by all means to confine, as they have hitherto done, their Endeavours for the Good of others, within the proper Sphere of private Christians; — and in no Case to take upon them the Character of

|| The following Paragraph would perhaps been more properly insert under Page 22. of the Preface, Line 8. where it is observed, that, altho' the Impressions on some of the Subjects of this Work should prove transient, it cannot be reasonably objected against the Sincerity of others.

Mr. Fisher says, p. 30: "It is most remarkable, that, within the Space of less than Eight Months, this Work is as suddenly decaying in the Place where it began, as it arose at first; and, in other Places, it has begun and decay'd in much shorter Time, even altho' all possible Means have been used to preserve it in Vigour." If Mr. Fisher means that there are now but very few in *Cambuslang* and some other Places under bodily Distress, it is no doubt true; for this good Reason, that the greater Part have attained to Peace and Joy of Mind in Believing: And it may be also true, that vast Numbers, whose Curiosity and Attention being awakned thro' these unusual Symptoms, did at first attend publick Worship there, do now attend their own Churches, as is most reasonable. But whereas Mr. Fisher adds, "That it is happened, at least to these who were immoral, and had not a Profession before, according to the true Proverb, 2 Pet. xi. 22." I hope it will give him Pleasure to be told, that he has been so far misinformed, that the very contrary is true: What may have happened with respect to some few, I can't say; but have good Authority to affirm, that the many Profane who have been wrought upon, still evidence a saving Change in their holy Walk and Conversation.

of publick Teachers, without a proper regular Call. This might be attended with many unhappy Consequences, and seems to have been the fatal Source of the Irregularities that take Place in some Parts of New-England.—

Suffer us, ye happy Subjects of this Work, to welcome you into the Household of Faith, to rejoice in your Felicity,—to bid you all good Speed in the Name of the Lord,—and to obtest you by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, by your Gathering together unto him, by all the Consolation that is in Jesus, by the Comforts of the Gospel, and your Hope of eternal Life, that ye be not soon shaken and troubled in your Mind, notwithstanding all Manner of Exil has been spoken against you;—remembering that it is thro' much Tribulation ye must enter the Kingdom of Heaven.— Love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you. Search and try your Ways.— Be jealous of yourselves.— Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation.— Stand fast in the Faith, quit you like Men, be ye strong. And may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, who hath loved us, and given us everlasting Consolation, and good Hope thro' Grace, comfort your Hearts, and stablish you in every good Word and Work.— This is the Prayer of

Your Servant for Jesus Sake,

Edinb. Nov. 20.

1740.

ALEX. WEBSTER.

SIR,



SINCE my Return from *CAMBUS-LANG* and *KILSYTH*, I had the Favour of yours, desiring my Opinion concerning the *so much talk'd of* Conversions in these and other Places. My present Situation makes it somewhat difficult to comply with your Demand; and yet Regard to Truth, and the Request of a Friend whom I am not accustomed to deny any Thing, obliges me not to conceal my Sentiments.

When any *extraordinary Event* is said to have happened, *immediately* to commence a Believer discovers much Weakness of Mind; to slight the Report without *proper Enquiry*, if attended with plausible Circumstances of Probability, is *criminal Indolence*; — and to refuse a Fact, if well vouched, *merely* because of an extraordinary Nature, *downright Infidelity*.

If the Event is not only out of the *common Course*, but of *great Consequence* to Mankind, it requires more serious Attention; and, ere we yield a rational Assent, must indeed be supported by a *proportional Degree* of Evidence. Things wonderful are not to be admitted upon slight Grounds.

What was alledged, first with respect to *CAMBUS-LANG*, and now as to several Places in the West, is doubtless *surprising*, and of the utmost Importance: — That such *Numbers* of thoughtless Sinners should be at once brought to this Soul-concerning Question, *What*

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must we do to be saved? — and that so many should share liberally of the Comforts of the Holy Ghost, is a rare Thing in this Day of *fatal Security* and *visible* Withdrawing of the Spirit. This, I apprehend, will vindicate my *solicitous Enquiries*, and apologize for the Doubts I at first entertained.

You know, I welcomed the News with *Joy* and *Surprise*, and often wish'd, in the Presence of the God of all Grace, that it might be so : But you was likewise the Witness of my perplexing *Fears* and *unbelieving Jealousies* ; — *Can these Things be ?* When the FACT became notour, and was attested by the most credible *Eye* and *Ear* Witnesses, there remained no *reasonable* Ground of Doubt ; and yet, having never seen such *remarkable* Effects of the Redeemer's All-conquering Grace, was much in the same Situation with the *Jews* when God turned back the Captivity of Zion, *like as Men that dream'd* ; or as the Disciples, when told that Jesus was risen from the Dead, *they believed not for Joy*. — Not being *naturally* over credulous, I was induced in this Matter *slow of Heart to believe*, and therefore resolved to use all *possible* Means of obtaining entire Satisfaction ; which made me embrace a Call I had in Providence to go to *CAMBUSLANG* : And having been there *once* and *again*, and likewise at *Kilsyth*, &c. what I now write is not *bare Hearsays* or *flying Reports*, but the Result of the most *deliberate* and *accurate* Enquiry. — What I have seen, and what I have felt of *Divine Influence*, that declare I unto you.

The SCENE indeed is almost beyond Description, and 'tis but a *faint Idea* I can promise to give of this surprising Dispensation of the Grace of God. The PUBLICK have already been told, that it had its *first remarkable Appearance* at *Cambuslang* on *Thursday February 18th*, when, after Sermon, Fifty Persons came together to the Minister's House, under alarming Apprehensions about the State of their Souls (a).

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(a) See the short Narrative, in a Letter to a Friend, Page 5. attested by Ministers, Preachers and others.

NUMBERS have been since awakned to a *like* Sense of *Sin* and *Danger*; — MANY comforted, and not a FEW filled with the Holy Ghost. Nor are these remarkable Events now confined to this *favourite* Place; — *KILSYTH* had likewise a peculiar Visit on Sabbath the 25th of *April* (*b*); — Many other Congregations have shared of the same Privilege (*c*): — Salvation runs from Door to Door; — The happy Influence diffuses all around.

During the Time of *Divine Worship*, solemn profound Reverence o'erspreads every Countenance; — They hear as Creatures made for Eternity, who don't know but next Moment they must account to their great Judge. Thousands are melted down into Tears; — Many cry out in the Bitterness of their Soul; — And some of both Sexes, and all Ages, from the *stoutest* Man to the *tenderest* Child, *shake* and *tremble*, and a *few* fall down as dead. — Nor does this happen only when Men of *warm Address* alarm them with the *Terrors of the Law*, but when the most *deliberate* Preacher talks of *redeeming Love*. — Bring them to *Mount Sinai*, where *Thunder* roars, and *Lightnings* flash, this may perhaps occasion *greater Outcry*; but lead them into the Consolations that are in *Jesus*, and then *vastly greater* Numbers fall under the most kindly Impressions. — Talk of a precious Christ, ALL seem to breathe after him. — Describe his Glory, how ravished do *many* appear! — How captivate with his Loveliness! — Open the Wonders of his Grace, and the *silent* Tears drop almost from *every Eye*. — Such eternal, such glorious Themes seem the Delight of their Souls, and reign triumphant over each *Power* and *Faculty*.

These, *Dear Sir*, are the *visible Effects* of this extraordinary Work during the Time of *Divine Worship*, the Truth of which will not be disputed, being obvious to all, and constantly evidenced in their publick Ministrations

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(b) See Preface to Mr. Robe's Narrative.

(c) *Kirkintulloch, Calder, Campsie, Gargunnoch, Baldernoch, St. Ninians, Muthil, &c.*

tions in a *less* or *greater* Degree.— Upon conversing with them when *publick Service* is over, which I made my particular Business, they give a *Scriptural* distinct Account of the Temper of their Mind, and various Springs whence their Tears of Sorrow or Joy flow.— Those struck in the most awful Manner, when recovered from the Violence of the Shock, mention the *quick* and affecting Sense they had of Divine Wrath before they were so affected.— They condescend upon the *particular* Part of the *Sermon* or *Scripture* which occasioned such Views of their *Guilt* and *Misery*:— They describe the *gradual* Openings of their Mind, till led back to the Rock whence they were hewn; they see that they were *conceived in Sin*, brought forth in *Iniquity*, and humbly acknowledge they have been *Transgressors from the Womb*.— They speak out a *painful* Sense of Sin, not only as the *Ruin* of the Creature, but *dishonouring* to a kind, a loving Saviour.— *Unbelief* in a particular Manner cuts them to the very Heart; they can't bear the Thoughts of having so long rejected the Son of God, and despised his endearing Calls in the Gospel.— Being perswaded that he is the *only* Redeemer of a lost World, they breathe after him under *every* Character, and in *every* Relation, as a KING upon his Throne clothed with Authority to reign, as well as a PRIEST on the Cross indowed with Ability to save.— Willingly would they part with all for an Interest in Jesus, and desire nothing more than to be taught by this great PROPHET.— Sensible of their *utter* Inability to believe, how earnestly do they pray, Open the everlasting Doors of our Heart; Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; be our God and Portion!

Those who have attained Comfort, *readily* give a Reason of the *Hope* and *Joy* that is in them, with *Meekness* and *Fear*; declaring, to the Praise of *Divine Grace*, how the Holy Ghost, formerly a *Convincer*, proved also their *Comforter*, by discovering their Warrant to lay hold on Jesus the Saviour, and happily determining them to embrace a *whole* Christ, as freely offered in the Gospel, for all their Salvation, and as all their Desire; *Whom* having

not seen, say they, we love; in whom, tho' now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.— Sensible of the blessed Change that has passed upon their Minds, they rejoice that *old Things are done away, and all Things become new.*

'Tis not pretended, nor can indeed be supposed (considering the former Ignorance of many) that all of them, when first awakned, give such distinct Accounts of the Working of their Minds; or that all, whom there is Ground to think *have fled for Refuge to the Hope set before them*, have attained to such a joyful Faith: But I have honestly described the Case of the Generality, as I had it from themselves.

Such as have not a like Opportunity of Converse with them, can have no other Evidence of their *inward Attainments* (abstracting from its Effects upon their Lives, of which afterwards) but the Testimony of others.

I don't call them to depend upon my Word *alone*; the Narrative, already referred to, will sufficiently confirm this Representation.— The Number of Witnesses are many;— Their Character *fair and good*;— They attest only a *Fact* which they could not mistake thro' Ignorance, namely, what the *Convinced or Comforted* declare unto them; and I think their *Veracity* is beyond all reasonable Suspicion.— Men must be deeply imbarqued in in the Opposition, who can suppose such a Number of Ministers, Preachers and others, hitherto of *untainted Fidelity*, living in distant Corners, and very different as to their Opinions in some Respects, all in League with Hell, and associate together to lie upon the Holy Ghost, that, *if possible, they may deceive the very Elect.*— *

'Tis not, I think, alledged, That Part of this SCENE is Pretence and Dissimulation; I mean, that the Persons professedly under Soul-concern, and which seems so to affect their Bodies, are *acting a Part*: The Reality has often appeared to the most *skilful Enquirers*. Some few Pretenders there were at first, but this Sickness would not feign;

* See Act of the Associate Presbytery anent a publick Fast, at Dunfermline, 15th July 1742, P. 2.

feign; they were immediately discovered, and solemnly rebuked.— It removes this Work the further from Suspicion, that Persons from *all different* Corners have been affected pretty much in the same Manner; and many are the Instances of *profane* and open *Mockers* falling under the like Power of the Word;— Ridiculing *this* Moment, and the *next* fainting under some dreadful Pressure.— It cannot, I think, be *fairly* supposed, that Men so disaffected would immediately join in putting a Cheat upon Mankind, and expose themselves, rather than not support a Cause till now the Subject of their Mirth.—

“ Good Impressions, says the *Narrative* (d), have been
 “ made on Persons of very different Characters and Ages; on some of the most abandoned, as well as more
 “ sober; on young, as well as old; on the illiterate as
 “ well as the more knowing; on Persons of a slower,
 “ as well as those of a quicker and more sprightly *Genius*;
 “ and, which seems to deserve special Attention, on
 “ Persons who were addicted to scoffing at sacred *Things*,
 “ and this Work in particular at the Beginning of it.”

But you'll readily ask, What Fruit have these Things? Does their Faith work by Love? Does it shew itself by Works?— Yes, my Friend, and that too in a most remarkable Manner.— Their Faith daily ripens into Action, and, to the Conviction of those who know them best, is a *living Spring* of *new Obedience*. They esteem all God's Precepts concerning all Things to be right, and hate every false Way.— The Lives of the *Profane* are visibly reformed;— *Relative Duties* conscientiously discharged, where were the most culpable Neglects;— The high Praises of God employ the Tongue of *Blasphemers*;— *Harmony* and *Peace* succeed *Strife* and *Contention*;— Families, once the *Synagogues of Satan*, are become Temples where God is worshipped and adored;— Persons of all Ages form themselves into little Societies for *religious Discourse* and *Prayer*;— Praise is perfected out of the Mouth of *Babes* and *Sucklings*;— grosser Sinners profess the greatest Remorse for Acts of Injustice, and don't fail to make *Restitution*, even where the Injury might

might have remained hid till Time is no more, — and where such Returns bear hard on their Circumstances.

Never did any Converts appear indowed with more of a *truly Christian Spirit*. — Their Souls burn with Love to God, and Desire to promote his Interest in a World; — with Love to Jesus, to one another, and to *all* that bear the *Divine Image*. They cheerfully *forgive* their Enemies, and wish well to their Fellow-creatures. --- [How *great* their Concern for the *Salvation* of Mankind, let their Works declare; Works, whatever some have falsely reported, confined within the *proper Sphere* of private Christians. Knowing the Terrors of the Lord, they *persuade* Men; — having tasted also that he is gracious, they commend his precious Grace; — their Labour of Love indefatigable; --- their Success great, insomuch that Numbers, now in a promising Way, date their *first* Concern from hearing others declare *what God had done for their Souls.*] (e).

Such, *my dear Friend*, are the *hopeful Beginnings* of this *God-like Work*, those a *few* of its *happy Consequences*; as you will see, not *only* from the Attestation of their *respective* Ministers, for the *same good Accounts* are given of their *present Behaviour* by those who have Access to the most *accurate Inspection* of their *daily Practice*:
Their

(e) Mr. Fisher, omitting the first Part of the inclosed Passage, cites the rest, P. 40. of his *Review*, and from thence charges Mr. Webster as mightily boasting of the Success of publick Exhorters without any lawful Calling. Whereas the Reader will see from the whole Paragraph taken together, that he refuses the Report that has been spread, as if the Subjects of this Work took upon them the Character of publick Teachers; and speaks only of their Concern for the Salvation of others, by good Instructions confined within the proper Sphere of private Christians, and to which they are directed, Heb. iii. 13. *Exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin.* I think it will not be alledged that this concerned only the *Hebrews*, or that it gives Countenance only to Christians to exhort one another: For, if one may exhort his Christian Brother to stand fast in the Faith, may'nt he beseech an Unbeliever to embrace the Faith, when God gives him a proper Opportunity, by declaring on the one Hand the Terrors of the Lord, or on the other by commending the Preciousness of Divine Grace?

Their particular Acquaintance, or nearest Relations, their Parents, Masters and Mistresses, are *living Witnesses* of their *holy* and *unblemish'd Conversation*.

'Tis justly alledged, That we must not lay too *great Stress* on the most promising Beginnings; and that *Perseverance* in good Fruits is the decisive Proof in Things of this Nature. Mean while, the *blessed Effects* already appearing promise as well as *Time* and the *Nature* of the Work will admit: And therefore Charity obliges to believe, the Argument *arising* from Perseverance shall not be wanting; it *daily* grows stronger and stronger, and we trust shall do so to the End.

'Tis indeed extremely possible, that the Impressions upon some are but *transient*, and that *several*, who seem to have started fair, will *return again to Folly*: But should this happen (which I pray God may not be the Case) it can no more be reasonably objected against the *Sincerity* of others, than the *passing Convictions* of a *Felix* will prove that *never* any were *truly converted* under *Paul's Ministry*; or that there are no *real* Christians in the World, because many have a Name to *live*, and are *dead*. *Judas*, seemingly not behind the other Apostles, betrayed his Lord and Master; and yet the rest seal'd the Testimony of Jesus with their Blood.

This plain State of the Case, one would imagine, evidently speaks out its *Divine Original*.---The *memorable* 18th of *February* was preceded by *three Days* of solemn Prayer and earnest Addresses for the Success of the Gospel;---The *Work* was begun and carried on under the Influence of *sound Doctrine* (f). And, as its *Rise* was thus *scriptural*, its *Effects*, you have heard, are no less so:---Sin is become bitter, Jesus precious to many Souls:---*Hundreds*, perhaps *Thousands*, have set out for *Heaven*, and *Immortality*; they are holding on in the Paths of *Truth* and *Righteousness*, and their Knowledge, like the Morning-light, advancing with increasing Brightness to the perfect Day (g).

(f) See *Narrative* attested by Ministers, &c. P. 4.

(g) The Reader has now seen, from Page 3. the Evidence

Nothing

(b) A

Nothing seem'd wanting to prove this a *Work of the Spirit of God*, but that it should be oppos'd by the Enemy of all Righteousness; and indeed he has not fail'd to furnish us with this Proof also.--- Amidst these Approaches of *Emmanuel's Kingdom*, *SATAN* and his emissaries do not cease to rage; and some, of whom better Things might have been expected, have gone to *useful Lengths* with those who blaspheme the Operations of the Holy Ghost; Company which, I'm sure, they could not *knowingly* wish to join.

But in vain do any attempt to fight against God, in vain do they think to bear down Truth: Facts, so well attested, are not to be shaken by *Suppositions*, *May-be's* and *Calumnies*;--- they must show that the Case in Hand is not capable of Proof, or ought to yield their Assent, when attended with all the *Evidence* which the Nature of the Thing will admit.

Now, I take it for granted, that the foregoing Representation contains nothing in itself *impossible*. That a family, a Congregation, or even a Nation, should be born at once, by no means exceeds *Divine Power*, and is exactly agreeable to the Prophecies of New-testament days, *when the Spirit should be poured out from on high*. The same Holy Ghost, who enlivens ONE dead Sinner, can with equal Ease, being every-where present and all-powerful, command any given Number into Newness of Life: His *quickning Ability* is the same To-day, as when *Three thousand Souls* were converted at one Sermon (b).

Nor can any *Impossibility* be justly alledged from our present Circumstances. How far we in this Land have departed from the Lord God of our Fathers, is not easy

B

to

on which a charitable Opinion is founded as to the Goodness of this Work, which Mr. Fisher is pleased to maintain, P. 24. is far short of the distinguishing Marks of a saving Work of the Spirit of God; and that he would think himself unfaithful to his Trust as a Minister, if he made People depend solely upon such Evidences of Conversion. And again, P. 43. That the People, for whom no better Evidences can be produced, not only may, but must be under a manifest Delusion.

(b) Acts ii 41.

to say ; but to suppose us beyond the Reach of Mercy is an *unworthy Limitation* of *Divine Goodness*, and proceeds upon this *fatal Mistake*, That, in converting Men God is moved by *something Good* and *Valuable* in them and acts not for *his own Name's Sake*, the *Glory* and *Freedom* of *Divine Grace*, but for *our Sakes*: A Supposition contrary to *repeated Declarations* in Scripture, and daily Experience, which teaches, that *he is found of them that don't seek him*, and hath Mercy on the *very chief of Sinners*, that in them he may shew forth a Pattern of all Long-suffering to those who should hereafter believe.

That not *one Soul* can be converted within the *Pale* of the *established Church of Scotland*, has not, I think been asserted in *express Words* by the most violent Opposers, nor can be entertained but by a Mind deaf to all Reasoning, through the Force of Prejudice. This, I know, has been charged upon the *Gentlemen* of the *Secession*, and drawn as an Inference from their Writings ; but, till they say so in *as many Words*, I am not willing to think so unworthily of them † ; nor judge it needful further to prove, that God may yet pity degenerate *Scotland*, and revive his own Work in the midst of these *Years of Backsliding and Defection* (i).

If he may thus display his *sovereign Grace*, I think we must leave it to the same *sovereign Lord* to choose what *Means*, and in what *Way*, he will accomplish this Work. — I don't wonder that the *original Seceders* (who perhaps, from a single Eye to his Glory, formed themselves into a separate Society) should *wish* and *hope* to have been the happy Instruments of reviving decayed Religion : But their Hopes have been carried beyond

(i) What Mr. Fisher remarks on this Place, is noticed in the Preface.

(i) Christ hitherto hath come to the Church when it needed a Reformation ; when Religion dwindled into an empty Form, and Professors had lost the Life and Power of Godliness ; when there was Midnight-darkness, and little Faith to be found on the Earth. Thus it was when he came in the Flesh ; when he sent *Athanasius, Luther and Calvin* ; and at the Reformation of *Scotland*, *Christ triumphing*, &c. by Mr. Finley, P. 27.

all reasonable Bounds, if saying, By us, and by us only, shall *Jacob* arise ; — In *this Way* God must act, and no other : Language altogether improper for a Creature.

If they look into their own *Breast*, or review their *After-conduct*, they will perhaps discover somewhat intermixed with their Offering, whence it has not been so acceptable to the most High. Not to enter on the Reasons why they at first seceded, there is one Thing I would suggest to their Consideration ; — That instead of acting upon their *first Principles* of preaching the Gospel to *desolate Congregations*, and holding Communion with those Ministers and People they were pleased to think an honest contending Party (*k*), they have, I'm afraid, for some Time been employed in weakning the Hands of these *very Ministers*. Have they not gone into their *Congregations*,

B 2

(*k*) But notwithstanding of this our present Seccession from the prevailing Party in the Judicatories of this Church, yet we hereby declare, as our Protestation bears, That we are willing "to hold Communion with all such as desire with us to adhere unto the Principles of the true Presbyterian Covenanted Church of Scotland, in her Doctrine, Discipline, Worship and Government; and particularly with every one who are groning under these Evils, and affected with these Grievances that we have been complaining of, and who are in their several Spheres wrestling against the same; and we hope that there is a goodly Number of such in the several Corners of this Church." *Testimony by Messieurs Ebenezer Erskine, Wilson, Moncrieff and Fisher, printed 1734, P. 95.*

"By withdrawing from these Judicatories (at present) and joining with the said Brethren, I intend and understand *no Withdrawing* from Ministerial Communion with any of the godly Ministers of this National Church, that are groning under, or wrestling against, the Defections of the Times, even tho' they have not the same Light with us in every Particular contained in the forefaid Testimony." *Adherence by Mr. Ralph Erskine to Mr. Mair's Declaration of Seccession given in to the Presbytery of Dunfermline, February 1737.*

After reading the above Adherence, Mr. *Mair* declared to the *Associate Presbytery*, that he was of the same Mind with his Brother Mr. *Erskine*. *Att, Declaration and Testimony 1737, Pages 117, 118, 119.*

Mr. *Fisher* thinks, that in P. 43, --- 46. he has given a sufficient Answer to what is here suggested to the Consideration of the *Associate Presbytery*. If the Reader think so likewise, I shall not think it worth while to undeceive him, as it does not at all affect the *main Argument*.

gations, where perhaps there was scarce a *Shadow* of Invitation? The *dismal Colours* in which some *Servants of Jesus* have been, on these Occasions, painted, I don't chool to represent; and all this for *no other Reason* but that they judged it their Duty to continue striving against the *Defections* of the Church, still hoping for better Days. What, then, if God is now testifying his Displeasure against such an Attempt to mar the Usefulness of these faithful Ministers, by not crowning their own Labours with the *wished Success*? Or, may he not, even in Pity to them, *remarkably countenance* the Ministry of some they despised, that they may henceforth learn not so rashly to call *those God has sanctified*, common or *unclean*? Could there be any Way of rectifying their Mistake, more *condescending*, more *worthy* of Himself?

To return; I would have it also considered, that God is so far from working always in the *Way* and by the *Means* that we would judge best, that almost *every remarkable Dispensation* of his Grace has been brought about quite contrary to human Views, and many Times by the most *unlikely Instruments*.—We would never have chosen *illiterate Fishermen* to confound the *Learning* and *Eloquence* of *GREECE*, or Twelve poor *defenceless Creatures*, destitute of human Force, void of *Eloquence*, to oppose the *Wisdom* of the *Great*, and the *Power* of the *whole* known World;—Nor would we have raised *PAUL* the Persecuter to be the most glorious Support of the *Christian Church*;—A *LUTHER* would have appeared a *contemptible Mean* to shake the Kingdom of *ANTICHRIST*: But God will have us to be still and *know that he is God*, who works in a *Way peculiar* to himself, that the *whole Power* and *Excellency* may appear to be from on high. So that it ought not to discredit this Work to any Set whatever, that God has not carried it on by the *Instruments* of their choosing, or under the Ministry of those they had mark'd out for the Honour.

Some resolve this whole Matter into the Influence of *mere Sound* and *Gesture*.—And because 'tis universally
acknow-

acknowledged, that the Minister of *CAMBUSLANG*, a Gentleman of *known Piety and Learning*, has but a weak Voice, no violent Action, and is far from endeavouring to stir up unreasonable Passions, they artfully connect this Affair with the Reverend Mr. *WHITEFIELD*; hoping that those who don't judge favourably of him, will, for *this Reason*, entertain sorry Notions of what has pass'd; — And that others, because of his *fervent Address*, will believe ALL, the *Effect of Mechanism*. The blending these Things together serves likewise to raise a Cry, tho' most unjust, as if PRESBYTERIAN and REFORMATION Principles were in Danger, and that this Work stands in *direct Opposition* to the *Testimony* of the Day. — It is therefore, in my Opinion, of Consequence to the Cause, to observe, that Mr. *WHITEFIELD* is *entirely* out of the Question (1). — My Regard for him is well known; he may be

(1) Mr. *Fisher*, P. 67. remarks, "That Mr. *Webster* would have " it believed that the Spirit is now poured down remarkably on " the establish'd Church, and wants to shape out Mr. *Whitefield* " from any Share of the Praise as the prime Instrument thereof " in Scotland; which (says he) I must own is not generous." Mr. *Webster* cannot agree with the Reverend Author, in thinking Praise proper to be ascribed in any Case to the Instruments of Conversion; and hopes never to be so generous, as to give the Glory of the Down-pouring of the Spirit to any Creature whatever; and desires ever to look beyond all Instruments, to Him with whom is the Residue of the Spirit. It cannot escape Observation, that Mr. *Fisher* represents this Paragraph as "denying Mr. *Whitefield* to be " the prime Instrument of what Good is done of late in Scotland;" tho' Mr. *Webster* is expressly speaking only of Mr. *Whitefield's* being out of the Question as to the Rise of the extraordinary Concern upon the Minds of the People at *Cambuslang*. And whereas Mr. *Fisher* adds, "That, in this Respect, Mr. *Webster* is not candid, and also " is inconsistent with his own Letter to Mr. *Whitefield*:" (*Glasgow W. History*, No. 27. London D^o. No. 60.) Mr. *Webster* appeals to the Letter, where there is first an Account given of the Success of Mr. *Whitefield's* Ministry while here amongst us; and then Mention is made of what has happened since he left Scotland, and particularly the surprising Work at *Cambuslang*. Is this inconsistent with saying that Mr. *Whitefield* did not so much as preach there when last in Scotland, &c. as in the above Paragraph? Where is the Disingenuity? Mr. *Webster* chooses rather that the Reader should judge what Answer this deserves, than express his own Sentiments.

be liable to err as well as others; I have not seen a *perfect Minister*, more than a *perfect Layman*: — But he is doubtless a *pious Soul*, — and one whom God has *highly honour'd* in the Work of the Gospel. However, it can give no Offence to say, — that he did not so much as preach at *CAMBUSLANG* when last in *Scotland*; — That he left this Country, at least, *four Months* before the *remarkable 18th of February*; and that, ere his Return in *June*, the Work had spread in many very different Places of the West. — We have been often told, that *Passions*, raised *mechanically*, are awaked, when the *mechanical Powers*, Voice, Gesture, or what you will, *act*; — And are always *short-liv'd*, ceasing for the most Part with the *Motion* of the *Instrument* whence they flow. — But here, it seems, *Sound* and *Action* operate on *Persons* who neither saw the *one* nor heard the *other*; or, if some of them were Eye and Ear Witnesses, yet they remain'd *unaffected* while the *mechanical Powers* were in Motion: — But when the *Engine ceased*, and *several Months* are elapsed, when the *Operator* is removed some *Hundred Miles* Distance from their *View* and *Observation*, *ALL* their *Passions* are fired by the *distant Machine*, and continue *still* to affect them in the most sensible Manner. You have studied, Sir, the Doctrine of *Sounds*, and their *Effects*, and I believe will admit this is talking so *unphilosophically*, as would expose the Authors of such Supposition, to *universal Ridicule*, was it not for the too general Contempt of *real* and *vital* Christianity.

Tho' Opposers don't succeed so well in accounting for the *Rise* of the *extraordinary Concern* upon the Minds of so many People at first, they are at no Loss to describe its *After-progress*; and entertain us with the wonderful Effects of *Sympathy*, and the *mighty Force* of *Example*; — And have discovered, that Persons may be *naturally* and *mechanically* moved with seeing others in Distress. — Who doubts of all this? But if they intend hence to say, that the *whole Spread* of this blessed Work is *mere Mechanism*, and consequently not to be regarded; Are they not plainly begging the Question? They will
forgive

forgive us not to admit *Affertions* for *Proof*, and to oppose the *scriptural Accounts* Persons affected give of their *Distress* or *Attainments*, the *substantial lasting Effects* these Things have had,—particularly in forming their Minds into a *God-like Frame* and *Disposition*, and all this followed by a *corresponding Reformation* of Life (m).

But if it is *only inferr'd*, that Persons now under *Concern* were or might be *first affected* by observing the *Concern* of others; in this we apprehend there is nothing exceptionable. *Actions* must be allowed to have a *Language*, in many Cases, more strong and perswasive than Words;—And if a Man, being himself a *Sinner*,—is touched with *seeing* the *direful Effects* of Sin upon others, or *hearing* their *moving Representations* of *approaching Danger*, his *Convictions* have a *most rational Spring*, and he does well to take *Warning* from their *Misery*.—In short, the *Fallacy* of the *Objection* proceeds upon a *Supposition*, that *Arguments* in favour of this *Work* are drawn from a *seeming outward Concern*, which may indeed proceed from *other Springs* than the *Spirit of God*:—Whereas the *Cause* is built on a quite other *Foundation*, as just now hinted; the *saving Change* wrought upon their *Souls* accounted for, by the happy Persons, according to the *Law* and the *Testimony*; and *this Change* evidenced in the *Whole* of their *Practice* and *Walk*:—EFFECTS which we contend cannot proceed from *mere Mechanism*, and must be admitted as *decisive* of the *Point* in question, there being *no other Rule* by which we can judge the *State* of another.

When *Sound* and *Gesture* won't do, and this *Earth* can't afford a *CAUSE* proportioned to the *mighty Effect*;—Rather than *God* should have the *Glory*, *Hell* must be searched, and the *whole glorious Scene* ascribed to the *Devil*.—Here we are put in mind, that *Satan* sometimes transforms himself into an *Angel of Light*.—But they must say a great deal more, *that he really is an Angel of Light*, and *working the Work of God*.—The *Devil* himself,

himself, was he not the *Father* of *Liars*, would, methinks, be ashamed to call this *his Work*, or claim the *Converts* as his *Children*.—How unlike to their Father!—From the Apostle *John's* Observation (n), *In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil: Whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother*; we must necessarily infer, *That whatsoever doth Righteousness is not of the Devil, neither he that loveth his Brother*. But it seems the *Apostle* is mistaken, and the *Devil* is now *getting many Children* by the *Word of Truth*, who *cannot sin, because born of him, and his Seed remaineth in them*.—THE WORLD UNMASK'D lies before me: I don't think the Author has hit upon any Argument half so conclusive as this, for his *final Restoration* of all Things, Devils not excepted;—It being generally admitted, that *Concern* for the *Salvation* of others, is one good Sign of a Person's own *Conversion*.

When these and the like absurd Consequences naturally follow upon resolving this Matter into *Delusion* and *Satanical Influence*, I can scarce think it possible such harsh Thoughts could have been entertained by ALL the ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY, but because of *Misinformation*, or rather some very gross Imposition. I am the more confirmed of this, when they say (o), “Nor will any of the Fruits of this Work, that have hitherto been alledged, be sufficient to difference it either from the *common Work* of the Spirit of God upon Hypocrites, or from the *Delusions* of *Satan*.”

The Fruits alledged, P. 6, 7. will be allowed sufficient to distinguish the *Work of God* from the *Work of the Devil*. The same Thing, on the Matter, was alledged (whether proved or not, is not the Question) in these *MISSIVES, ATTESTATIONS* and *JOURNALS* they refer to in their said Act.—Shall I then think them *all insincere*?—No; Charity obliges me to believe

(n) 1 *John* iii. 10.

(o) Act of the *Associate Presbytery*, &c. P. 3.

believe the *greater Part* have depended upon the *Testimony of others*, without reading the Attestations, *Misfives, &c.* Whence I would willingly hope, — now that they see such *good Fruits both alledged and proved*, — they will, as on other Occasions, frankly acknowledge their Mistake; especially seeing, if this *Affair* complexly taken, in its *Rise, Progress and Effects*, don't point out a *genuine Work* of the Holy Ghost, there seems no *Criterion* left to distinguish the *Operation* of the Spirit of God from the *Spirit* of the Devil; no Way by which we can know the Voice of *him* who speaketh *from Heaven*, from the Voice of him who speaketh *from Hell*. — What of *infernal Agency* is alledged, from some *uncommon Symptoms*, will be considered afterwards: And shall only further say, That it ought not to shake the Faith of serious Souls, lately brought home to Christ, that they have been arraigned as under the *Delusions* of *Satan*: — Jesus himself was thus reviled, — and the *Operation* of his *Divine Spirit* ascribed to *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils. — The *Argument* whence he exposed the *Folly and Iniquity* of this Supposition, will *equally* support their Cause: The *Question*, which on this Occasion silenced the *Pharisees*, will *equally* difficult their Opposers; — *Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to Desolation, and a House divided against a House falleth; if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his Kingdom stand (p)?* 'Tis indeed moving, that the Opposition is joined by some of whole Christianity I can have no Doubt; and yet no strange Thing has happened. *LUTHER*, who now enjoys delightful Communion with *CALVIN* in the *Jerusalem* above, was rash enough to call him a *white Devil*, when *equally* concerned with himself to promote the Interest of their *common Lord and Master*.

Again, this blessed Work has been represented as the *Ministration of Death*, flowing merely from *legal Terrors*, and *issuing in Despair*.

The *Terrors* of the Lord have indeed awak'd many

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(p) *Luke* xi. 17, 18.

to *timely Fear*, making them, as the Man pursued by the Avenger of Blood, *flee for Refuge to the Hope set before them*; But (which is a Wonder of Grace) not *one Soul*, to the best of my Information, has given over Hopes of Mercy.--- That MEN, in Danger of *Hell*, should be afraid of *Hell*; and that *Children of Wrath*, being moved with Fear, should flee from that *Wrath*, is the Language of *right Reason*, and exactly agreeable to *Revelation*, which represents the Law as a *Schoolmaster leading to Christ*.--- Every adult Person must in a *less or greater Measure* be brought to a *Sense of Danger*, ere they welcome Jesus their Deliverer; and this is necessarily attended with a *correspondent Degree of Terror*.--- Fear is interwoven, as it were, with our Make; that we may shun Evil, it sounds the Alarm, and is generally the *first Spring* which excites to Action; tho' *Hope and Love* must be allowed the more endearing Motives, and what effectually captivate Heart and Soul.--- Nor are these wanting in the present Case, as already represented (q).--- Whatever *awful Views* attend *first Convictions* in some, especially *grosser Sinners*;--- yet, how sweetly are they afterwards moved with the *Cords of Love*, and *these Bonds of a Man*! Few prehaps were ever *more feelingly* constrained by the Kindness of a Saviour.

ENTHUSIASM is next brought into the Account, which is ever at hand with some Pretenders to Reason, to discredit the *Operations* of the Holy Ghost.--- The *sudden Change* which, they *suppose*, the Converts undergo from *Fear* to *Hope*, from *Terror* to *Joy*, and an *alleged Variableness* of their Frame, explains the whole Mystery to Gentlemen of their Penetration.

They will forgive me to say, that, as they build upon very *false Suppositions*, their *Conclusions* are equally unjust.--- Many among the *first awaked* continue *still* in Distress; The *greater Part* have attained to Hope, in consequence of a *gradual distinct Work* upon their Mind:--- And, if *some few* have not been *so long* under the *Spirit of Bondage*, it seems quite agreeable to Divine Goodness;---

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Where the Sense of Wrath was so deep and affecting, had it been also lasting, the Spirits which God had made must have failed before him. And, because God is kind and condescending in pitying the Weakness of his Creatures, shall our Eye be evil?

That the Mind must be inlightned in the Knowledge of Sin and of a Saviour, Faith wrought, and the Nature changed, ere a Man can be denominate a Christian, or rejoice in the Good of God's chosen Ones, is allowed; but that these Beginnings of the Divine Life must always be a Work of great Time and Leisure, requiring Months or Years, is nowhere that I know taught in Scripture, and seems directly contrary to many Instances there recorded.---How soon was Saul the Persecuter changed into Paul the chief of the Apostles (r)? --- Three thousand, lying in Sin and Wickedness when Peter begins to preach, are Believers before he has done, and that very Day added to the Church (s); the trembling Taylor becomes that same Hour a joyful Believer (t); a Thief, while hanging upon the Cross, is at once inlightned, justified, comforted, and amidst his expiring Groans made meet to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light (u).

God, who commanded Light to shine out of Darkness, saying, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*, can with equal Ease, and in a Moment too, shine into the Heart, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ; working at the same Time the most joyful, lively Faith. And even suppose, according to the mistaken Principles of some Moralists, Conversion did not at all proceed from Divine Influence, but was the Effect of mere Reason and Argument; still the Change wou'd pass upon ONE much sooner than upon another, and that in Proportion to the Quickness of their Genius, the Pliableness of their Will, the Tendereness of their Affections, and more advantageous Circumstances, &c. --- We find, in common and civil Life, one Man will learn more in a Day than another in

(r) Acts ix. 1, &c. (s) Acts ii. 37, 41. (t) Acts xvi. 29, 30, 34.
(u) Luke xxiii. 43.

a Year;--- And an *ingenuous Mind* be moved with very *small Intreaty*, when *repeated Solicitations* and *multiplied Arguments* are necessary to gain the *more obstinate*.--- It cannot therefore warrant the Charge of *Enthusiasm*, that a Sinner under Soul-distress has attained some Measure of Ease and Quiet in a *few Days*, if he can give a *good Reason* of the Hope that is in him.

Call him an *Enthusiast* if you will, who is *constantly fluctuating* amidst the *troubled Waters* of *Despair*, and high *Tides* of *Joy*, when not able to assign a *reasonable Cause* either for the *one* or the *other*: But so far is this from the *present Case*, that *those* who *sooner* than others have passed from *Darkness* to *Light*, from the *Power* of *Satan* to the *Kingdom* of *God*, give the most satisfying Account, *first* of their Distress, and *then* of their Relief. Not is their *After-frame* more variable than what is common to other Christians, flowing from the present State of Imperfection: *SOME* have arrived at *solid Joy* and *Peace* in believing; *OTHERS* still harrass'd with *remaining Doubts* and *Fears*; and if ye find a *FEW* lamenting an absent God, who *once* walk'd in the *Light* of his Countenance, this, I apprehend, is no *unusual Case* amongst Saints of longer Standing, and more Acquaintance with the religious Life (w).

When Opposers ascribe this Work to *Fancy* and *Whim*, they consider it as consisting *wholly* in *Impressions*, *irrational Fears*, and *delusive Joy*; and seem quite to have forgot its *certain Fruits* and *Effects*, *Change* of *Nature*, and *Renovation* of *Life*. They will allow, that from *nothing*, *nothing* can proceed; that *every Effect* must have a *Cause*; that *no Cause* can produce an *Effect* more *real* and *excellent* than itself; And from thence it will follow, That *Fancy* must be the *Consequence* of *Fancy*, and *Delusion* the *only Effect* of *Delusion*: Whence then the new Nature in these Converts? Whence their Newness of Life? Shall we believe the *most glorious*, the *most substantial*,

(w) *Psal.* xxx. 7. *Psal.* lxxvii. 7, 8, 9. *Psal.* lxxxviii. throughout. *Song* iii. 1.

stantial, the *most real* Blessings the Product of *mere Imagination*, the *Offspring* of a *deluded Brain*! Thrice happy Delusion! --- O my Soul, may I ever thus be deceived, and ever feel the same blessed Effects!

It would appear that others in the Opposition are apprehensive,---if the Fruits be good, they can't *reasonably* be supposed to flow from *such false delusive Springs*; and therefore take another Way,---misrepresenting their Conduct who are the *Subjects* of this Work.

Idleness and Neglect of their civil Affairs is a *principal Charge*,---but not better supported than a Thousand other flying Reports.---

That Persons almost struck dead, and cut to the Heart with the *Twinges* and *Throws* of an *awakened Conscience*,---should not enter *so heartily* into the Business of Life --- while feeling the Smart, --- will be no Wonder to one who experimentally knows a *wounded Spirit*, and is in itself no more surprising than that we don't find *Paul* making Tents when lying on the Ground through the o'erwhelming Influence of the heavenly Vision. Besides, it will be found, that when the Violence of the Shock is over, and especially where they have attained to the *joyful Prospect* of a happy Eternity, they go on in their *respective Callings* with *uncommon Cheerfulness* and *Alacrity*, and well deserve the Character of *not slothful in Business, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord*.--- Even when the Number of the Distrest, and the *Circumstances* of their Case, required more than *ordinary Attendance* upon *Prayer* and *Exhortation*, this was so managed as to occasion *little or no Interruption* in their Labour; --- Of which their *present plentiful Crop* is sufficient Evidence: And *now*, in all their *Religious Societies*, such Times and Places are fixed upon as *least interfere* with their other Engagements.--- It may be very true, that *at first*, when an Event so remarkable ingrossed the *Attention* and *Conversation* of all around, Persons otherwise idly disposed (of which there are Numbers in the neighbouring as well as other populous Cities) might, under Pretence of attending Divine Worship, employ

employ themselves quite another Way, and defraud their Masters of their Time : But it is evidently *Unfair-dealing* to charge this (if it be the Case) upon the Ministers, who were careful to discourage such Practices ; or upon the *Body* of the serious People, who act another and and in *all Respects* a good Part. *Tares* will mix in with the *Wheat* to the End of Time, and the *Vile* dwell with the *Good* in this World of Sin and Sorrow.

Suffer me to add, That such Objections, of being a *little too* long engaged in spiritual Worship, generally proceed from these who can trifle away *whole Nights*, or perhaps spend them in Calumny and Slander, if not in Chambering and Wantonness, Rioting and Drunkenness : --- And it will hold true in general, that *more Time* is criminally employed in censuring those *devout Souls*, than they employ in Prayer. I am as much as any Man for People's minding their *proper secular Affairs*, and judge that he *who does not provide for his own House is worse than an Infidel, and hath denied the Faith* ; --- but must likewise think, there are *certain Seasons* when more Time than ordinary may be set apart for Things of *eternal Concernment* : And am extremely apprehensive, the Noise that is made about not *more carefully attending* to Things temporal, proceeds from forgetting that we are but *Pilgrims and Strangers in this Earth*, --- who, having here *no continuing City*, should look for one that is to come, and *seek first the Kingdom of God and its Righteousness*. --- Let Men who have their Portion in this Life, count *every Hour* lost which is not employed in amassing perishing Riches ; --- But let the Christian, whose Hopes ly beyond a Grave, reckon *no Day* well spent wherein he does not make some Advances towards *Heaven and Immortality*.

Fancy'd Imprudences are much talk'd of ; and every trifling Irregularity magnified into Disorder, inconsistent with a Religion coming from the God of Order, --- and the Doctrine of the Apostles, who would have all Things done with Decency.

The

The Ministers Conduct is, in my Apprehension, capable of a *fair and rational* Vindication.---If *every Thing* has not been conducted by others so prudently as could have been wished,---Is not this almost the *necessary Consequence* of an *Affair* so *new and extraordinary*,---where it is not pretended the Subjects of it are all *learned Divines* and *sedate Philosophers*?---But how will this improve the Work upon the Minds of *Hundreds*, against whom *even this Objection* does not ly?---Or, if *every Irregularity* as to *Time* or *Place* (for Instance) of meeting for Prayer, demonstrate that the Work in *general* is not from God;---How shall we reconcile the glorious Things said by *Paul* of the Church of *Corinth*,---with the much greater Disorders (than has been alledged in the present Case) they are charg'd with in the same Epistle by the same Apostle (x) ?

It ought to be considered, that *human Frailties* necessarily mix in with all our Affairs *civil and religious*; and, should we seek *only* for Religion where there is not the *least Deviation* from the Rules of strict Order, I doubt much if we find *Faith upon the Earth*. If Allowances are to be made, doubtless *young Converts* claim our Charity in the *first Place*, especially when their Distress has been great, and their Joy proportional:---Like Men coming into a *new Country*, or rather *new World*, they are not yet acquaint with all the *Fashions and Decencies* of it;---It is no Wonder *every Punctilio* is not observed, which *After-experience* and *cooler Reflection* will dictate. Shall we pardon the *learned*, the *composed ARCHIMIDES*, tho' going beyond *all the Bounds of Decency*, when transported with a mathematical Discovery, and finding out only certain Propositions in Figures, an *abstract Truth*, not *immediately* calculate to attract the Affections, and confined to this World in its Consequences;---And shall we make *no Allowance* for illiterate Country Men and Children, and others of small Experience, when *ravished* with the Discoveries of *another World*, and the *Knowledge of God and Christ*, whom to

know

(x) Compare 1 Cor. i. 1,--7. with Chapters xi, xiv.

know is Life eternal ? This were to treat them not with *common Humanity* ; but they must expect *no Quarter*.
 It almost exceeds Belief, which yet is further objected (y), that they should be charg'd as under the *Power of Delusion*, for not *immediately* throwing off their own *Ministers* who have been their *spiritual Fathers*, and not embracing a *Testimony* which many of them never saw, --- and cannot *easily* comprehend ; and, what is still *more surprising*, condemn'd because not joining those who, upon the *first Rise* of this Divine Work, were not afraid to ascribe it to the Devil.

Desire to promote the Glory of God, is indeed *necessarily* connected with a real Concern for our own Salvation ; where Christ dwells in the *Heart*, he will be confess'd with the *Lip*.--- The Children of Zion naturally seek the Good of Zion, and, when in the *due Exercise* of Grace, prefer Jerusalem to their chiefest Joy.--- The Interest of Christ's *visible external Kingdom* is dear to such Souls ; This, in their proper Spheres, they endeavour to promote,--- but still according to the Measure of Light which God has given them :--- And doubtless ALL good Men have not the *same Views* in this Matter.--- Nor will it be pretended by any *sober thinking Person*, that if the *Subjects* of this Work, *whose Love to Christ* seems *stronger than Death*, have not Freedom to make a *total Separation* from the Ministers of this Church, even the *happy Instruments* of their Conversion, and join the Brethrens Platform in *all its Circumstances*,--- they can *no more get to Heaven than a Man can walk without Legs*.

I don't think my Charity, tho' a Presbyterian, very extensive, when I can suppose, not only with a Reverend Gentleman, an Independent, *within the Reach of the Gospel-offer*, but *within the Bonds of the everlasting Covenant*, and hope one Day to meet with Dr. Owen in the *heavenly City*, where there is *no Temple* (z).--- “ Dare any of

(y) See Act of Associate Presbytery, &c. P. 3.

(z) This Mr. Fisher, P. 68. calls Mr. Webster's *publishing to the World his big Hopes of Heaven* ; tho' Mr. Webster apprehends he has

" of you (says a late Writer ^a to the *ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY*) tell the most zealous
 " for your Testimony, and against their own Ministers,
 " that these Things are *Marks* and *Evidences* of saving
 " Grace, --- and that they may depend upon them as
 " such ; --- or that the judging your Testimony *irregu-*
 " *lar*, and what the Lord required not at your Hands in
 " the *Way* and *Manner* you have given it, --- and their
 " *close Conjunction* with their Ministers, are *certain Evi-*
 " *dences* that they are *Christless* and *Graceless* who do
 " so ^b ?

But suppose, if you will, the Brethrens Testimony the *Standard* of true Religion, to which *all gracious Souls* will at *length* adhere ; Will they allow no Time for Consideration ? Was not their own Arrival at *present Truth* the Consequence of *several Years Enquiry* ? --- Mayn't one then be *Half a Year* in a State of Grace, before *equally* enlightened ?

[A Person under *alarming* Apprehensions of Divine Wrath, cannot with *much Sedateness of Mind* peruse the *endless Volumes* that have been writ on *visible external Forms* : --- What would you think of his Convictions for Sin, who made *Church-government* his *first Enquiry* ? Would he not, do ye imagine, be as *reasonably* and *profitably* employed in reading *Guthrie's Trial of a saving Interest in Christ*, as in studying *publick Acts and Testimonies* ?] And suppose he has attained real Faith, yet, as the first Actings of this Divine Grace are oft-times attended with much Darkness as to many Things relating to the spiritual Kingdom of God in the Soul, these demand the Believer's chief Regard, and should employ
 D his

has express'd his *humble Expectation* of Heaven in the most decent Terms. This much he is not ashamed to acknowledge to the Praise and Glory of Divine Grace ; and thinks, tho' he had spoke of a *firm Persuasion*, it might have been allowed by Mr. *Fisher*, who now entertains favourable Notions of the *Doctrine of Assurance*, and does not pretend, P. 24, 67. to monopolize Heaven.

^a Mr. Robe's Narrative, Preface, P. 17.

^b Mr. Fisher's *strange evasive Answer* to this Question, was noticed in the Preface.

his first Thoughts. It seems therefore at least a *hasty Conclusion*, to charge the Subjects of this Work, when but beginning to be religious, many of them still at a Loss whether or not really in Christ, and others still further from Comfort, to charge them ALL WITH DELUSION, for not *already* lifting up *the Testimony of the Day*, viz. *the Testimony of the Associate Presbytery* : A harsh Conclusion indeed ! especially considering *the Stumbling-block* in their Way, not easily got over. --- How shall they enrol their Names with the Se-

c Mr. Fisher, in P. 53. remarks, "Any who have read Mr. Webster's Letter, may observe how contemptuously he speaks of the Government and Discipline of the House of the living God." For Proof of this extraordinary Libel, he quotes the inclosed Part of the Paragraph, p. 25. *the rest not answering his Purpose; and then goes on* : "Now, granting that the Doctrine concerning the Government of the Church doth not fall under the Enquiry of a Person under Conviction, at the first Instance; yet I am perfectly sure, that the Spirit of God, in his convincing Work, doth not beget in any Soul an *Aversion to publick Acts and Testimonies* for the declarative Glory of God, as evidently takes place in Mr. Webster himself and these he is pleading for. What can he mean by the *endless Volumes* that have been wrote on *visible external Forms*? but that *Presbyterial Church-Government* has been mightily controverted and opposed, therefore it is worth no Man's while to take up his Head about it."

He had told us, P. 48. "In order to secure the People in all Time coming from joining the Seceders, or ever appearing zealous for Presbyterial Church-Government, all Pains is taken to persuade them that a Testimony for the same is nothing but mere Bigotry; that they may be good People, *whatever Denomination* they be of; and therefore they ought not to be taken up with these *lesser Things*, but only about the Vitals of Religion, *wherein the Matters of Church-Government have no Concern*. It is plain, that this Doctrine opens a wide Door for *boundless Toleration and Liberty of Conscience*; yet that this is the leading Principle of *the Promoters of this Work*, both at home and abroad, shall be shown from their own Writings." Here you have his Promise; and in the above Paragraph, cited from his 53d Page, you have the Fulfilment thereof *so far as it respects Mr. Webster*. And it is submitted to the Reader, if he could have discovered the *several Articles* of this heavy Charge without Mr. Fisher's Assistance; or if from the whole Argument taken together, which begins at this Mark ¶, Page 24. he can discern any Thing inconsistent with the justest Regard for Presbyterian Principles.

Seceding Brethren? How shall they associate in their publick Assemblies, where they are *excommunicate* as the *Children of Satan*? How shall they join, with uplifted Eyes and Hands to Heaven, in *deprecating* the *farther Influences of the Spirit*, with respect to themselves or others, which they *know to be real*, and *feel so sweet upon their own Souls*? Would not this be in *them* (I don't speak of others) a near Approach to, if not in Reality, *the Sin against the Holy Ghost*? And shall they be charged as *acted by the Devil*, because not *willing to give themselves up to the Devil* ^d?

D 2

Last

I could not have thought any Man would have adventured to assert, that *an Aversion to publick Acts and Testimonies for the declarative Glory of God, evidently takes place in Mr. Webster*; when he maintains, P. 24. "Desire to promote the Glory of God is indeed necessarily connected with a real Concern for our own Salvation. When Christ dwells in the Heart, he will be confess'd "with the Lip." Does Mr. Webster speak contemptuously of the Government and Discipline of the House of the living God, who directly asserts, *ibid.* "That the Children of Zion naturally seek the Good of Zion, and, when in a due Exercise of Grace, prefer Jerusalem to their chiefest Joy;" and "that the Interest of Christ's visible external Kingdom is dear to such Souls?" Or does he teach, *That People ought to be taken up ONLY about the Vitals of Religion, wherein the Matters of Church-Government have no Concern*; or that it is worth no Man's while to take up his Head about Presbyterian Church-Government? Tho' he directly asserts, *ibid.* that he himself is a Presbyterian, and "that good Men in their proper Spheres endeavour to promote the Interests of Christ's visible external Kingdom."

The wiser Part of Mankind will soon see through this *low Art* of misrepresenting the Principles of those who think favourably of the blessed Work; that it can have no other Meaning than to prejudice the Ignorant, who judge *only* of a Book by its Author, and of an Argument by the Principles of those who propound it: And 'tis more than probable, that such *abortive Attempts* to blacken Mens Characters will in *due Time* discover the *true Spirit* of our Opposers.

^d Mr. Fisher remarks, P. 67. "Mr. Webster takes a very effectual Course to *nail down* the poor deluded People to their own Ministers, by telling these who are the Subjects of this Work, "That it would be in them a near Approach too, if not in Reality, *the Sin against the Holy Ghost*, to hear the Seceding Ministers. "If the most rigid Popish Confirmation can equal this, I leave it to himself to judge."

Last of all, it is objected, That that this Work is attended with *bitter Outcryings, Faintings, severe bodily Pains, Convulsions, Voices, Visions and Revelations*; the usual Symptoms of a delusive Spirit.

Voices, Visions, Revelations are added, I suppose, for *Argument's Sake*.—None of the Subjects of this Work pretend to these Things. One or two Impostors, I'm informed, under such Pretences endeavoured to discredit this Work at the Beginning; but it is well known what Care was taken to detect them, and how effectually they were discouraged,--- It seems therefore like a Willingness to find Fault, to object against this People, what was done by their Enemies with Design to blacken them. And

Is it possible that such Misrepresentations can pass for good Coin? The most heedless Reader will observe, that Mr. Webster is removing an Objection brought against the Subjects of this Work, for not joining with the Associate Presbytery; to which he answers, *That there is a Stumbling-block in their Way, not easily got over*; and asks, How shall they enrol their Names with the Seceding Brethren, &c. p. 26. beginning at this Mark . Whence it appears that the Question is not about these young Converts hearing the Seceding Ministers in general, but how they can hear and join with them in their Prayers, while they continue to deprecate the Influences of that Divine Spirit with respect to themselves and others, which they know to be real, and feel so sweet upon their own Souls? If Mr. Fisher can inform the World how one, firmly persuaded that he is by the Power of the Holy Ghost translated from Darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, shall associate himself and join with these in Prayer, who plead to deliver him from the *Jesuitical Influence* and *unhappy Delusion*; if he will inform us, how such an one shall pray in Faith, nothing doubting, and with a good Conscience; it is then Time enough to charge Mr. Webster with taking *Papish Methods* to prevent People joining with the Seceders. Mean while it should be remembered, that *nailing down* is a Method quite inconsistent with Mr. Webster's *Toleration-principles*, and what seems more applicable to the Reverend Mr. Fisher and his Brethren, who deal pretty much in Tests and Subscriptions to strengthen the Association, and seldom fail to frighten their Congregations from hearing in the established Church, by *solemn and awful Warnings*.

Mr. Fisher asserts, P. 62. That 'tis most certain many of the Subjects of this Work pretend to *Visions, Voices, and Revelations*; as can be proven by innumerable Witnesses, who have heard them own so much. If Mr. Fisher means any other than the few

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And I would have it also *carefully* noticed, that Persons whose Distress of Mind visibly affects their Bodies, or who go the Length of crying out, *bear but small Proportion* to the *much greater Number* who are wrought upon in a more *kindly usual Way*, and about whom nothing has appeared, but what is common in other Cases, when People have been awak'd to a serious Concern about Religion. So that tho' all were put out of the Account, against whom the Objection militates, or in whom there appears any Thing doubtful to the most intelligent cautious Person, still there would be Ground to believe well of *vast Numbers* ^f.

Besides, the happy Experience of *Thousands* judicious Christians witness, that, when lately at *CAMBUS-LANG* and *KILSYTH*, &c. *truly their Fellowship was with the Father, and with his Son Christ Jesus*; and judge so, *by the same Rules* whence they have formerly been able to conclude that they enjoyed the Lord: This should make one the more afraid of joining the common Cry, *Delusion, Satanical Influence*, and what not? And,

Impostors (who, 'tis here allowed, pretended to some such Things at first) 'tis a Discovery of which I have not heard. — And as all the Ministers, and Elders, and private Christians, who have had most Occasion to converse with the Subjects of this Work, absolutely refuse, so far as my Information goes, that they pretend to these Things, — I must be allowed not to credit Mr. Fisher's Informers, until they condescend upon the *Names* and *Places* of Residence of such Persons, attested by a few at least of the *innumerable Witnesses* who (he says) have heard them own so much. When acquainted with the Nature of their Voices, Visions and Revelations, we will be better able to judge if they are inconsistent with a real Work of the Spirit of God. — But supposing that some of the Subjects of this Work did pretend to Voices, &c. and that these were inconsistent with real Conversion, how will this conclude against vast Numbers, who don't make such high Pretences? — If the Errors of a few are to be charged upon the whole, what Society is in a right Way?

^f The Reader 'tis hoped will, as desired, carefully notice the above Paragraph, beginning at this Mark *¶*, because, as observed in the Preface, the Opposers of this Work continually argue upon some *uncommon Circumstances*, as if these took Place in *all*; whereas the Objection, *trifling as it is*, militates only against a *few*, in comparison of the *vastly greater Numbers* about whom nothing *unusual* appears.

And, on the Whole, it follows, that whatever Judgment we form of such whose Concern is attended with *unusual Symptoms*, it can never found a *general Charge*, nor weaken the Argument for the Genuineness of this Work with respect to others. --- ☉ [For allowing that *Satan*, who no doubt is present at such Meetings of the Sons of God, was permitted to harrafs *several Persons in this extraordinary Manner*, it would no more prove the Work in *general delusive or diabolical*, than the Charge could be brought against our Saviour, and such as thro' his Word believed on God; --- *Satan being then permitted to tear Multitudes, and cast them down to the Ground* &c.]

We might therefore here break off the Argument: But not being willing that ANY shou'd be thought *the Children of the Devil*, that there is good Ground to think God has rescued from the Jaws of this devouring Lion, I would observe, That it seems very rash Judging, to draw too harsh Conclusions, *merely* on account of *stronger Intpressions* upon Peoples Minds than ordinary, and the *natural Effects* of this upon the Body.— If they who judge favourably of these Persons built their Hopes upon *such extraordinary visible Appearances*,—the In-

* Mr. Fisher, after citing the inclosed Part of the above Paragraph, says, P. 15. “ As if *Satan* had been permitted to tear and cast down to the Ground Multitudes of these who through the Word of Christ believed on God, which is the *only Meaning* his (Mr. Webster's) Words can bear to make Sense of 'em, &c.” If Mr. Fisher's Willingness to find Fault did not precipitate him so much, the *least Attention* might have taught him, that Mr. Webster in the above Concession is so far from supposing that *Satan* was permitted to tear and cast down to the Ground Multitudes of them who thro' the Word of Christ believed in God,---that he is supposing directly the contrary,---and granting, that altho' all the People in the West under *bodily Seizures* were really as much possessed by *Satan*, and under *diabolical Influence*, as the *Demoniacks* in our Saviour's Day,---this would no more prove the Work in *general delusive*, or (as it is expressed in the same above Paragraph) *weaken the Argument for the Genuineness thereof with respect to others*, whose Concern is not attended with *those Symptoms*,---than the *Demoniacks* in our Saviour's Time, and their Possessions,---cou'd be used as an Argument against the Conversion of *others* not under these Possessions, who believed in God thro' our Saviour's Word.

Instance of a *Felix* trembling, &c. which *probably* did not issue in sound Conversion, might justly be objected : But when this good Opinion is founded upon the *exact Resemblance*, as to the main Strokes, which the Exercise of their Minds bears to a genuine Work of the Spirit of God, as taught in Scripture, and experienced by Saints in all Ages,—and upon *their holy religious Conversation* flowing from this *inward Change* ;—when the Argument in their behalf is thus built on *such rational scriptural Grounds*, and *no Weight* is laid on their outward Distress ;—To what Purpose are we entertained with *trembling Quakers*, *deluded Camizars* ^h, *propheying Enthusiasts*, *fainting Hypocrites*, and *short-lived Convictions* ? From this History-piece we may indeed learn, that Men may *faint*, may *tremble*, may seem to undergo the *Pangs of Death*, and yet still continue under the *Power of Satan* and the *Dominion of their Lust* ;—and this we readily admit. But does it *thence follow*, that Persons who give all *Evidences* of a *sanctified Nature*, a *renewed Mind*,—are still in the *Gall of Bitterness* and *Bond of Iniquity*, *morely* because, when first convinced, the direful Apprehensions of Wrath had *such Effects* upon their Bodies ?—It might with *more Reason* be inferred, that if the *too slight Convictions*, of a *Felix* for Instance, made him *shake and tremble* ; when *Convictions* are *real*, are *thorow*, are *deep*, are *lasting*, they will have *no less*, nay, *greater outward Effects*. But indeed there is no Reasoning from *Effects upon the Body*, as to the *Nature* of the Work upon the Mind, either one Way or the other.

In short, our Opposers may please themselves with finding out how many, that seem'd once in the Way to Heaven, are now in Hell ; but must either say, that if Person *faint*, *tremble*, or *fall down as dead*, they cannot be

^h Mr. Robe in his Preface, p. 12.---shews accurately the great Disparity between the Case of the *Camizars* and these affected in the West. Mr. *Fisher* in his Review, -- p. 37.---39. *strains hard to find out a Resemblance* ; upon which I should have made some Observations, had I not been informed that Mr. *Robe* designs to publish a Defence of his Preface, &c.

be under the Influence of a good Spirit,—and that 'tis impossible their Convictions should have a saving Issue; *This much* they must say, or they say *nothing to the Purpose*.¹—And, if they will go *thus far*, I shall not have the better Opinion either of their *Philosophy* or *Christianity*.

The *Laws of Union* betwixt Soul and Body, and their necessary mutual Influence, continually evidenced in *common Life*, will account for Effects *much more surprising*. Suppose *several Person* apprehensive of no Danger, blessing themselves with present Enjoyment, big with future Hopes,—at once seized,—arraign'd, tried, cast, condemned to the Flames; it would exceed no one's Belief to be told, *when the Sentence passed, and the Fire was a preparing*,—ONE wept, ANOTHER cried out, a THIRD trembled,---a FOURTH fainted,---ALL swoon'd away.---Again, suppose them bound to the Stake, the Sparks kindling up,--- when, of a sudden, the Flames are quenched,--- their Bonds loosed,--- Pardon intimate,--- and all imaginable Assurance given that they are Heirs of a Kingdom;--- Wou'd it surprise us to hear that *frail Nature*, o'erpower'd with *rapturous returning Joy*,---once more died away?---The Application is obvious; And our Surprise should be less, if secure Sinners, till now insensible of their Condition, thus faint and fail, when falling under immediate Apprehensions of Wrath more intolerable, and the Approach of Flames unquenchable,---- or when pluck'd as Brands out of this Fire, and ravished with all the Wonders of Grace, and Glories of redeeming Love.--- As the Joys of Heaven far exceed the Pleasures of Sense, and the Terrors of Hell more dreadful than of a Furnace seven Times heated;--- 'tis natural to think their Effects should be proportionally greater, and wou'd doubtless be the Case, if attended with the same quick and affecting Sense.

Souls,

¹ Mr. Fisher allows of falling down in hearing of the Word in some Circumstances, but disputes it in the present Case, to which an Answer is returned in the Preface.

It greatly strengthens the Argument taken from the *natural and obvious Effects of sudden Fear and unexpected Joy*,--- that we find such Instances in Scripture.---- How can a Christian read of *perhaps Three thousand* wounded Souls, *whose Convictions had a saving Issue*, crying out at once, under the Ministry of the Word, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* --- or of the *trembling Jaylor*, afterwards a *real Believer*, brought to his Knees, and to the same importunate Question, with *awful Terror?* Can they realize the *now glorified Paul*, struck to the Ground, *trembling and astonished*, under *alarming Apprehensions*; --- or *John*, the beloved Disciple falling; *as one dead*, at the Redeemer's Feet, when appearing the *glorious and exalted King of his Church?* Can they think of the *devout Psalmist*, *roaring all Day long*, while *God's Hand lay heavy upon him*^k; --- or the fainting Spouse of Christ, praying to her Beloved, --- *Stay me with Flags,*

^k Mr. Fisher says, p. 31. For a Scripture-instance of *Crying out under the Ministry of the Word*, or in Time of publick Worship, Mr. Webster cites Acts ii. 37. and tells us, That "Three thousand wounded Souls cried out at once." One, who is not afraid to charge others with *Inconsistency* and want of *Candour*, should stand at the utmost Distance from the very Appearance of *Disingenuity*; and yet it would seem Mr. Fisher has not been so careful in this Respect as might have been expected. His unfair Representations of Messieurs Edwards' and Robe's Words are not confined to one or two Places. Some Instances of Misrepresentations in our Case have been already noticed: Here it is still more *palpable*, when he makes me *directly* assert, that Three thousand wounded Souls cried out *at once*. Tho' I was at the Time of writing this Letter, and am still, of Opinion, that, by all rational Rules of Interpretation, 'tis at least more than probable that a good Number cried out *at once* while Peter was preaching; yet being aware that it was not minutely determined whether all, or what Number, of the Three thousand (that Day added to the Church) cried out, or if all that did cry out, did it precisely with one Breath; therefore I only observed, "How can we read of, *perhaps*, Three thousand wounded Souls, whose Convictions had a saving Issue, crying out at once?" This PERHAPS, not answering the Purpose Mr. Fisher had in View, must be blotted out. A Cause that needs such Supports cannot be extremely good.

gons, comfort me with Apples, for I am sick of Love
 Cant. ii. 5.—Do they admit all this; And can they con-
 sistently

That the Reader may have a clear View of this Matter, let it be observed,

That Peter, continuing his Discourse, says,

Acts ii. ver. 36. Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Ver. 37. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their Heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?

Ver. 38. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 39. For the Promise is unto you and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Ver. 40. And with many other Words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward Generation.

Ver. 41. Then they that gladly received his Word, were baptized: And the same Day there were added unto them about Three thousand Souls.

On the contrary, Mr. Fisher says, "Here there is not the least Mention of *Crying* or *Screaming*, but only that they said or spoke with that *Calmness* and *Composure* of Mind which attends the Operations of the true Spirit. Nor is it said that they spoke all at once, as Mr. Webster affirms, which would make a confused and unintelligible Sound; nor that they spoke in the Time of Peter's Sermon, but, after he had finished and applied his Discourse, v. 36. the Success thereof appeared in a convincing Work of the Spirit of God, which was intimated to him and the rest of the Apostles by several of the Multitude, v. 37. some speaking, in that Interval, to one of the Apostles, and some to another. Whereupon Peter begins another Discourse suitable to their Case, v. 38. a great Part whereof is not recorded; for it is said, v. 40. That with many other Words he did testify and exhort. The Issue of all was, v. 41. That the same Day there were added unto them about Three thousand Souls."

I believe the Reader will find in this Commentary of Mr. Fisher's almost as many fanciful Suppositions as there are Sentences. I once thought he had the Honour of being the first Inventor, till, turning up the pious Mr. Henry's Commentary, it appeared that he was obliged to this good Man's practical (no one will say, critical) Observations for some of the above Hints. However, as Mr. Henry's Piety seems preferable to his Judgment upon this Place, so he expressly says, commenting on *Zech. xii. 10, 11.* That this Prophecy was fulfilled in those to whom Peter preached, when they (N. B.) cried out, What shall we do? And indeed I should think it an

sistently object, that if PERSONS cry out, or tremble, or faint, or fall down as dead, their Convictions can't be
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an Insult upon the common Understanding of Mankind, to prove, That Men pricked to the Heart or run thorow with a deep Sense of having crucified the Lord of Glory, and their immediate Danger on that Account; that Men in these Circumstances, brought to the last Extremity, asking how to escape impending Wrath, would cry out or speak with the utmost Vehemence and Concern; or to shew that these Words, *They said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* to which Peter only replies, contain a Request to the Apostles jointly, and not to the Apostles one by one. Peter's finishing one Discourse and beginning another, the Interval, and the separate Conversation of the Persons convicted, some with one Apostle, some with another, is truly ingenious, but needs a new Bible for its Support. Mr. Fisher might with almost the same Authority said, that the Sun stood still, to give Day enough for the separate Conversations of such Multitudes: He might have as well condescended on the Distance there was betwixt the several Apostles, that the People might not confuse one another with an unintelligible Sound; or have told us, that they were closeted up in different Apartments, that all Things might be done with the utmost Decency.

"As for the Jaylor, Acts xvi. 30. says Mr. Fisher, p. 32. there was a Concurrence of extraordinary Providences that occasioned his Trembling, which cannot be pled in the present Case: *The Foundations of the Prison were shaken by a great Earthquake, and immediately all the Doors were opened, and every one's Bands were loosed,* Acts xvi. 26. This, together with his being happily prevented from Self-murder, and disappointed of his Fears with respect to the Escape of the Prisoners, made him come trembling," (*so, it seems, any Thing may occasion Trembling, but the fearful Apprehensions of Divine irresistible Wrath*) "and fall down in a Way of civil Homage only, it being the Custom of the Eastern Nations to pay their Respects in such a humble prostrate Manner, as the Continuator of Pool observe on this Place; and it was after all that the Man's Conscience was thorowly awakned, when he said, v. 30. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*" The Continuator of Pool, speaking of his falling down, distinct from his trembling, consider it indeed as a Piece of civil Homage, but at the same Time plainly allow that it was connected with the Awaknings of his Conscience, when they tell us (which Mr. Fisher has thought proper to omit) that it "did shew the Humility and Brokenness of the Jaylor's Heart." And the same Continuator, commenting on Luke iii. 10, 11. observe, "Tho' the Preaching of the Law doth not immediately conduce to work Faith in us, yet mediately it doth, as it brings Men to cry out, as those, Acts ii. 37. or as the Jaylor, *Sirs, what shall*
E 2 "we

genuine, their Spring must be *diabolical*, and their Consequence *Hell*? Or can they say, that, if *Nature* is o'er-power'd

"*we do to be saved?*" Mr. Fisher had no Use for Mr. Henry here, because he says on this Place, "These that have Sin set in Order before them, and are made to know their Abomination, cannot but tremble at the Apprehension of their Misery and Danger." And tho' he admits of the Jaylor's reverend and respectful Address, yet adds, "He fell down before them, viz. Paul and Silas, as one amazed at the *Badness* of his own Condition, and ready to sink under the Load of his Terror *because* of it."

"As for the Instance (*Acts ix. 4, 6. continues Mr. Fisher, p. 32.*) of Paul's falling to the Ground, upon occasion of a Light from Heaven shining round about him; it is plain, that as he was to be employed in the Office of an Apostle, so he behoved to have an immediate Commission from the Lord Jesus, which he received at that Time, *Acts xxvi. 16.* but there can be no Argument drawn from this as a precedent for *falling down*, when no such extraordinary Occasion for it can be pretended." If Arguments for the Genuineness of this Work, with respect unto them that have been under *bodily Distress*, were laid in this Manner, They tremble, they fall down, and therefore must be converted, because their Case resembles the Conversion of Paul and the Jaylor; then no doubt different Circumstances might be objected:-- But when we plead for nothing more than that such outward Effects are not inconsistent with real saving Conversions,-- then these Instances, notwithstanding some different Circumstances,-- are quite to the Point in Hand,-- as they shew that such Things are by no means incompatible. And Mr. Fisher himself allows, p. 27. of falling over in hearing of the Word,-- where there was no Earthquake,-- no Shaking of the Prison,-- no visible Light shining from Heaven,-- nor any to be employed in the Office of an Apostle.

Mr. Fisher adds, "Tho' it be said, *Rev. i. 17.* that the Apostle John fell down as dead, upon the glorious Vision that he had of the Son of God,-- all Visions are not it seems from Satan or diabolical; "Or that Daniel had no Strength remaining in him upon the same Occasion;-- Can there be any Argument drawn from these extraordinary Privileges conferred upon eminent Saints of God, and the Effects of them, to support the bodily Agonies of ignorant People,-- who are not so much as alledged to be converted while in that dismal State?"-- Here Mr. Fisher entirely mistakes the Fact:-- For the Instance of John is not brought for illustrating the Case of those under Conversions, from which they have got no satisfying Outgate;-- but to shew that the Tastes of Divine Love, which some of the Subjects of this Work have experienced, upon their having attained to real Faith in the Redeemer as held forth in the Gospel-promise, may be nevertheless real, tho' frail Nature was overcome thereby. Accordingly 'tis said, p. 33. of this Letter, "Can they realize John the

power'd with the *Glory* and *Love* of *Jesus*, all is *Fancy* and *Whim*?

But

beloved Disciple *falling as one dead* at the Redeemer's Feet;—and can they consistently say (see p. 36.) "That, if Nature is o'erpower'd " with the *Glory* and *Love* of *Jesus*, all is *Fancy* and *Whim*?" 'Tis too true, that such ravishing o'erwhelming Discoveries of redeeming *Love* are but rare,--- yet not so rare as Mr. *Fisher* would insinuate, nor the *distinguishing Privilege* of an Apostle.--- Many Saints of a *lower Form* and *Size* have been made to cry out, "Stay thy Hand, Lord, for I can hold no more."--- Nature has been o'erpower'd, and their Clay-vessels ready to break in Pieces.--- Mr. *Flavel* gives Instances of this Nature, *Treatise on the Soul of Man*, 4th Ed. p. 501. and reckons them "among the more common Foretastes of Heaven and the *Glory* to come, with which many Believers are favoured in this World."--- He particularly speaks of a Minister, *meaning probably himself*, who in a Journey had such ravishing Tastes of heavenly Joys, and such full Assurance of his Interest therein, that he utterly lost Sight and Sense of this World, &c.--- At last he perceived himself almost chok'd with Blood, which, running in Abundance from his Nose, had discoloured his Clothes and his Horse from the Shoulder to the Hoof.--- Hence he found himself almost spent, and Nature to faint "under the Pressure of Joy unspeakable and unsupportable."

And for the Instance of the Psalmist *David*, *Psal.* xxxii. 3, 4. Mr. *Fisher* says, "If Mr. *Webster* had proved that this Roaring was " in Time of publick Worship, it had been to the Point; but I " suppose that, tho' the Roaring be taken in a *literal Sense*, it will " be granted that it was in secret, and none disturbed therewith." Mr. *Fisher* should remember, that the Opposers of this Work charge some of the Subjects of it with crying out after, as well as in Time of publick Worship;--- and that he himself charges some of them, p. 27. as *falling over* when not hearing the Word:--- It was therefore to the Point in Hand, to give Instances of Persons so affected.--- And I would ask Mr. *Fisher*, if ONE under a Sense of Divine Wrath, can't contain himself in his Closet, but *must* cry out;--- Will he admit that *such a Person* may notwithstanding be under *real Convictions* which may issue well;--- and yet affirm, That if the *same Person*, so struck in Time of publick Worship, cannot contain himself, that then it must be *Delusion* and *satanical Influence*?--- He may say, Such an *awakened Sinner* was not so *polite* nor so *decent* as could have been wished; But what then? The Question is not about a *mere Punctilio* of Decency, or whether or not some might be disturbed;--- (tho', by the by, some might also reap Benefit. See p. 46. of this Letter) but, if such *outward Expressions of inward Concern*, should they happen in Time of publick Worship, will prove that these Convictions cannot be genuine, that their Spring must be diabolical, and their Consequence Hell?--- However Mr. *Fisher* thinks

But farther, Such Instances of *bodily Distress*, flowing from the *Terrors* or *Joy*s of the Lord, are not confined to Old-testament Days, to the Times of the Apostles, or first Ages of Christianity. Later Periods afford Examples of a *similar Nature* ¹.

The

thinks this Roaring is not to be understood literally of a great Noise, because other Expressions of a like Nature cannot be so understood.—I don't think this Consequence will hold, nor on the other Hand judge it a Matter of such Importance as to dispute the Point; for tho' the Psalmist's Expressions, *v. 3, 4* should not be taken in their exact literal Sense, yet either they must be understood, not only as Mr. *Fisher* would have it, "as expressive of the Degree of the Soul's Exercise," but also this Exercise of Soul some how evidenced, either in Words or in its outward Effects upon the Body; otherwise Scripture-phrases may be explained away altogether.

¹ The Reverend Mr. *John Livingston* says, of himself,—"I remember the first Time ever I communicate at the Lord's Table was in *Stirling* when I was at School; when sitting at Table, and Mr. *Patrick Simson* exhorting before the Distribution, there came such a Trembling upon me, that *all my Body shook*; yet thereafter Fear and Trembling departed, and I got some Comfort and Assurance." *Printed Account of his Life*, P. 5.

Mr. *Robe* in his Preface has excerpted a Passage from the Author of the *Fulfilling of the Scripture*, P. 185. Folio Edition, so much to the Point in hand, that I cannot omit here transcribing it.—"I must here instance a very solemn, and extraordinary Outletting of the Spirit, which about the Year 1625, and thereafter, was in the *West of Scotland*, whilst the Persecution of the Church there was hot from the *Prelatick Party*. This, by the profane Rabble of that Time, was called the *Stewartoun Sickness*; for in that Parish first, but after thro' much of the Country, particularly at *Irvine* under the Ministry of the famous Mr. *Dickson*, it was remarkable, where it can be said (which diverse Ministers and Christians yet alive can witness) that, for a considerable Time, few *Sabbaths* did pass without some evidently converted, and some convincing Proof of the Power of God accompanying his Word; yea, that many were so choaked and taken by the Heart, that, thro' Terror, the Spirit in such a Measure convincing them of Sin, in hearing of the Word, they have been made to fall over, and thus carried out of the Church, who afterward proved most solid and lively Christians. And as it was known some of the most gross, who used to mock at Religion, being engaged, upon the Fame that went abroad of such Things, to go to some of these Parts where the Gospel was then most lively, have been effectually reached before their Return, with a visible Change,

"sol-

The Histories of other Countries contain *Facts pretty much*

“ following the same ; and truly, this great Spring-tide, which
 “ I may so call, of the Gospel, was not of short Time, but for
 “ some Years Continuance : Yea, thus, like a spreading Moor-
 “ burn, the Power of Godliness did advance from one Place to
 “ another, which put a marvellous Lustre on these Parts of the
 “ Country, the Savour whereof brought many from other Parts
 “ of the Land to see the Truth of the same.”

Mr. Robe remarks, That there is much Reason to conclude that the *above Work* from 1625 to 1630 was attended with much the *same Appearances* as *this* now. Mr. Fisher, p. 25. says, He “ must
 “ be allowed to shew that there is the *widest Difference* between
 “ *this present Work* and the Work of God *then*, in every Respect,
 “ and observes, That the Author of the *Fulfilling of the Scrip-*
 “ *tures* is there giving Instances of the remarkable Outlettings
 “ of the Spirit, attending the Ministry of these who were ho-
 “ noured to be most instrumental in carrying on Reformation-
 “ work.” And, *after condescending on Instances*, infers, “ So that
 “ the Author is speaking of the Outlettings of the Spirit that
 “ have accompanied *publick* as well as *personal* Reformation.
 “ But can *any* of the Promoters of this Work alledge for them-
 “ selves, that they are making the *least Essay* towards *publick*
 “ Reformation as it has been owned and professed in these Lands ?”
 Would Mr. Fisher have them to sound their own Praises, as he
 does his, that he might have Pretence for his Charge against
 them, p. 36. of their vain-glorious Boasting ? None of them, I
 suppose, will pretend to equal Mr. Dickson, one happy Instrument
 of the blessed Work in the 1625, &c. But they have the Testi-
 mony of their own Conscience, and they hope also of others,
 that they are, *according to the Measure of their Light*, essaying,
 in a humble Dependence on Divine Grace, to promote, both in
 their *private* and *publick* Character, the Interest of true Religion.
 For my own Part, I have thought it my Duty, p. 58. of this
 Letter, to observe, That such a surprising Dispensation of the
 Grace of God ought to be considered as an endearing Call, by
every one, to endeavour in their proper Sphere after *real* Reforma-
 tion both *personal* and *publick*. Nor will it be pretended I should
 think, even by Mr. Fisher, that *all* whom he is pleased to call the
 Promoters of this Work have joined in *these* Steps of Defection
 the *Associate Presbytery* charge on the established Church.

Mr. Fisher goes on, “ Again, the Lord’s Work at Irvine, at the
 “ Time mentioned, was not attended with such cloudy Appear-
 “ ances as cleave unto the present Work amongst us.” Is not
 their being choaked, and taken by the Heart, their falling over
 thro’ Terror, and thus carried out of the Church, Appearances
similar to the present Case ? No, says Mr. Fisher; this is all that
 is said of them; “ There is no Mention of their *bitter Outcryings*,
 “ *Convulsions*, *bodily Agonies* and *Strugglings*.” And, p. 28. “ Their
 “ frail

much the same ^m; nor are like Instances wanting in this Church,

"frail Bodies were *inactive* for a while, without the *least Agony*, "*Convulsion* or *Struggling*." Is Mr. *Fisher* serious? Is not falling over thro' Terror as inconsistent with a Work of the Spirit of God as trembling?

He likewise observes,—"That the Occasion of their falling over was the overpowering Influences of the Spirit of God upon their Souls *in the Hearing of the Word*, which is not refused in *some* Circumstances: But, in the present Case, *Multitudes* fall over without hearing a Word spoken, as Mr. *Edwards* allows to be the Case abroad, &c."—His Method of Reasoning from Mr. *Edwards* has been noticed in the Preface.--- But says he, "Several have owned, that it was not by Means of *any Word spoken*, or brought to their Remembrance, that they underwent bodily Seizures."---Well, is there not still a *Resemblance* as to *them* who in the present Case fall over in hearing the Word?---Or, how does an Acknowledgment of several conclude with respect to Multitudes?---Besides, as Mr. *Fisher* does not pretend to say they acknowledged so to himself, he will suffer me to call in Question his Authority; in regard that from personal Conversation with the Subjects of this Work, and by Information of the Ministers who have daily Access to be with them, I can aver, that *such* as have been seized *immediately* after publick Worship is over, or at *other Times*, account for their Distress by the lively Sense they had of Sin set home upon their Mind, thro' Means of *some Scripture* or *Sermon*, or *good Instruction* they had received, brought *powerfully* to their Remembrance. Mr. *Fisher* further says,—"They had no such frequent Meetings" on Week-days as take place in the present Case, to the manifest "Detriment of relative and stational Duties." This Objection I have obviate, p. 21. of this Letter. It might have been well spared, seeing their meeting oftner than usual, was absolutely necessary in the Infancy of this Work: Nor does it come with so good a Grace from a Member of the Associate Presbytery, whose *circular Journeys*, and *constant Preaching*, have been frequently remonstrated against, and *Calculations* made, how much publick Industry was thereby injured.---The Author says only,---*adds* Mr. *Fisher*, That "few Sabbaths did pass without some evidently "being converted." Wou'd Mr. *Fisher* by this insinuate, that the Influences of the Holy Ghost attending publick Ministrations are confined to Sabbath-days?---In vain then are all our Preachings at any other Time.---

Mr. *Fisher* concludes, "And as it is the manifest Scope of the "Author, in the Place quoted, to give Instances of the Power of "God, accompanying the Ministry of those who were essaying "Reformation-work; so it may justly be inferred, that these "People espoused the Testimony of their Day, the Reverse where- "of is the sad and dismal Effect of the present Work."--- What

Church, even since the late glorious and happy Revolutionⁿ.

These

is Mr. *Fisher's* Intention by this Observation? Does it not look like a Delign to perswade ignorant People, --- that the Spirit of God is not to be expected but in their Way, --- and that real Converts will of Course associate themselves with them? --- I hope he has not so soon forgot his Assertion, but one or two Pages back, That none of the Ministers of the Secession ever said, or he believes ever thought, that none can be converted within the Pale of the established Church, &c.

I am aware, Mr. *Fisher* may pretend that he is only shewing the Disparity betwixt the Work formerly and now: --- But, if he has no Intention to insinuate that the Spirit of God will not bless the Ministry of *any* in the established Church, --- he might as well have told us --- that there is a Disparity, because the Work referred to was in the Year 1625, --- the present in 1742, that under the Ministry of Mr. *Dickson* at *Irvine*, &c. this under the Ministry of Mr. *McCulloch* at *Cambuslang*, &c. and because the former was opposed by the profane Rabble of the Time, the latter by the Associate Presbytery; --- that in the first Case the People joined the Ministry of Mr. *Dickson* who was the Instrument of their Conversion, in the second they did not join Mr. *Fisher* who was not their spiritual Father, and who charged them all as under a Delusion. --- Neither Mr. *Robe* nor any one will deny, that *so far* there is a Difference betwixt the Work above-quoted, and the present. But we insist, That both are attended with *much* the same Appearances, and that both issue in real Conversion; and apprehend this will be evident to the Reader, who observes, --- that they were choked, taken by the Heart, and thro' Terror made to fall over when hearing the Word, --- and carried out of the Churches, &c. And who also compares what is said concerning Mockers, in the above Passage, with p. 6. of this Letter. --- In these Respects, we plead there is a *near* Resemblance; and therefore think the Passage very much to the Point in hand, --- notwithstanding all that Mr. *Fisher* has said. ---

^m The manifest Resemblance of the late glorious Work in New-England to the present Case, is obvious from the Reverend Mr. *JOSEPH NATHAN EDWARDS'* Sermon upon the distinguishing Marks of the Spirit of God, where you will see several of the foregoing Objections are insisted upon against that Work, and there answered at great Length, and with much Judgment.

ⁿ It is well known, and can be vouched by several Persons yet living, of known Character and Veracity, who have seen and heard what passes at *Cambuslang*, &c. among such as are affected in the Manner objected to, that they have frequently observed, in different Parts of the Country, Convictions for Sin, attended with the like bodily Distress, many being carried out of the Churches *trembling, trembling, fainting, almost dead*, under the Ministry of the

These Things taken together *mutually confirm* and *strengthen* one another, and are *sufficient Evidence* that the *greatest bodily Distress* attending *Convictions for Sin*, or the *Overwhelmings of frail Nature* under a lively Sense of *Divine Love*, can be no Argument against the *Genuineness of such Convictions*, or the *Reality of such Joy* :---- And it likewise hence appears, that however *these Effects* upon the Body, have not for *some Years* been so visible and strong ; yet the Case is by no means *unprecedented*, or not so *uncommon* and *extraordinary* as some would have us believe.

I don't wonder, that Persons who never felt the Power of *Divine eternal Things*, --- in whose Creed *Heaven and Hell* have no Place, --- shou'd stand amazed at what has happened ; but cannot so easily account for their Unbelief, who have known *the Terrors of the Lord*, and also *the Joys of his reconciled Countenance* dawning upon their Souls after a dark Night of *Despair or Desertion*.--- Their *outward Man* has not perhaps been so much affected ; --- But have they not learned this much, that had God appeared in *more terrible Majesty*, --- or afterwards surrounded with *more lovely Splendor and Beauty*, Nature must have failed ? --- And I cannot help thinking, had we *more just and believing Apprehensions* of Things eternal, a *more quick and affecting Sense* of what belongs to our everlasting Peace, --- the Instances before us wou'd not be so rare or astonishing ; --- nor would it then be thought so unpolite for a Sinner to appear afraid of everlasting *Burnings*, --- so unfashionable for a Saint openly to rejoice in *Hope of eternal Life* °.

I was

the Reverend Masters *John Hepburn of Orre, Andrew Darling of Kinnoul, William Stewart at Blairgourie, John Moncrieff of College-Church, Edinburgh, &c.* and that many of these People, not a few of whom are still in Life, give to this Day *evident Proof* of the *Reality* of their Concern, by their *sedate and religious Conversation*.

° I had almost forgot to observe, that Mr. *Fisher* says, p. 28.
 " Since Messieurs *Robe* and *Webster* have been searching the Author of the *Fulfilling of the Scriptures*, in quest of an Exam-
 " ple

I was asked t'other Day, Why this Work was carried on in *such a visible Way*? why attended with *unusual Sym-*

“ ple of *this Work*, which they so much cry up; I shall put them
 “ in mind of a Passage from the same *Author*, much nearer the
 “ *Point in Hand* in all Respects: *Great Appearances of God for his*
 “ *Church under the New Testament*, p. 201.---- When the Gospel
 “ was flourishing in the Church of *Ireland* by the Ministry of
 “ some eminent Servants of Christ, who were labouring there
 “ some Years before the *Rebellion*, and a most extraordinary
 “ Time of the Power of the Spirit following the Ordinances;
 “ when others of *Satan's* Devices, to cast a Let in the Way,
 “ had proved abortive, this great *Destroyer* was at last let loose
 “ in a strange Manner, to essay a Counterfeit of the Work of the
 “ Lord there. This first began about *Lochlearn* upon several ig-
 “ norant Persons, who, in the Midst of the publick Worship, fell
 “ a Breathing and Panting, with strange Pangs like *Convulsions*;
 “ yea, thus they were affected, whatever Purpose was preached,
 “ even by such Ministers who were known Enemies to the
 “ Truth; the Number of which still increased through several
 “ Parishes for a Time. At first both Ministers and Christians
 “ were put to a stand; but afterward, upon further Discovery of
 “ the Tendency of their Way, and finding no solid convincing
 “ Work, which had therewith any Sense of their Sin, or Panting
 “ after a Saviour, did quickly perceive this to be one of the
 “ *Depths of Satan*, and his Design to slander and disgrace the
 “ Work of the Lord.---- Yea, it was evident, how such did con-
 “ tinue afterwards rude, profane and ignorant. Thro' this En-
 “ gine did the Devil thus drive to beget Prejudices amongst those,
 “ who did look on at a Distance, against the Power and Life of
 “ Religion.”

Those who think, with Mr. *Fisher*, that the People in the West, affected with bodily Distress, were under a Possession of *Satan*, ought, I apprehend, fairly to conclude from the above Quotation,----that when the Gospel was flourishing in the Church of *Scotland*,---- and a most extraordinary Outpouring of the Spirit attending Ordinances, working by these Means a saving Change upon the Souls of many, accounted for by the happy Persons according to the Law and the Testimony, and this Change evidenced in the whole of their Walk and Practice,---the only Rules by which we can judge the State of another,---and about whom nothing has appeared but what is common in other Cases when People have been awakened to a serious Concern about Religion;-- That, in this great Spring-tide of the Gospel, *Satan* was let loose in a strange Manner to essay a Counterfeit of the Work of the Lord,-- and was permitted to affect several Persons with Tremblings and Faintings; and thro' this Engine did the Devil drive to beget Prejudices amongst those, who did but look on at a Distance, against the Power and Life of Religion.

Symptoms? but have learned too much of my own Ignorance, to fancy I can fathom *the Depths of a God.*
How.

I appeal to every unprejudiced Mind, if this is not the fair impartial Conclusion they ought to make; and not to infer, that because several Persons were under satanical Influence (supposing this true) and bodily Seizures, therefore the whole Work, even with respect to others not so seized or possessed, must be Delusion.—Had the Author of the above Remark argued in this Manner, he would have concluded this Outpouring of the Spirit in *Ireland* to be nothing else than infernal Agency.—But passing this, if the Reader shall compare the Narrative attested by Ministers, the *Killyb* Narrative, or the 3d,---7. Pages of this Letter, with the above Passage, he will find the greatest Difference betwixt the People about *Lochlearn* and the Subjects of the present Work. 'Tis owned that these People had no solid convincing Work, which had therewith any Sense of their Sin; --- In the present Case they have a most solid convincing Work, attended with a deep Sense of Sin original and actual, and that as dishonouring to God and the Redeemer, as well as ruining to themselves.—Those did not pant after a Saviour; These we speak of breathe after Him under every Character, and in every Relation. Those in *Ireland* continued ignorant; These in the West have learned much of God, and of Jesus Christ, whom to know is Life eternal; so that Mr. *Fisher* seems to think them inspired, &c. *tho'*, according to him, by the Devil. " 'Tis obvious (says he, p. 38.) to the Observation of all, that the People among us, who undergo those bodily Seizures, presently turn eloquent, and can talk fluently upon some Scriptures, *tho' grossly ignorant* before of the very first Principles of Religion; and, if this is not Inspiration, I know not what it is." Lastly, Not to make any further Remarks, Those in *Ireland* continued rude and profane; These in the West are civilized, their Walk and Conversation holy, and such as becometh the Gospel of Christ. So that, on the whole, the parallel Case, which Mr. *Fisher* brings from *Lochlearn*, is as dissimilar and opposite to the present, as Darkness is to Light, Ignorance to Knowledge, and Vice to Religion. It indeed from thence follows, and nothing more, That Persons may fall a Breathing and Panting as these who had run long with strange Pangs like Convulsions, and yet not be savingly convinced or converted. Who denies this? Is it not acknowledged in so many Words, p. 31. of this Letter? But does it not likewise follow from the other Passage cited out of the *Fulfilling of the Scriptures*, p. 38. of this Letter, that Persons may through Terror fall over in bearing of the Word, and be carried out of the Church, and their Conversions notwithstanding have a saving Issue? which is sufficient in support of the present Argument. And both Passages, taken together, shew to Demonstration, as we have observed, p. 31. That

However, without pretending to *search out the Almighty to Perfection*, --- there are many good Reasons, obvious to us, --- which infinite Wisdom might have in View, and a Thousand more may be hid in the unfathomable Abyſs of Divine Councils.--- It is well known what Numbers in our Day reckon the *plain Preaching of a crucified Jesus mere Foolishness*; and how much a PREACHER is esteemed, among these who claim the Privilege of the best Judges, in *Proportion* as he despises the *peculiar Doctrines* of the Gospel, and substitutes *vain Philosophy* in place of *Christ Jesus the Lord*.--- And he is indeed a Stranger to the *fashionable World*, --- who does not know, that the *Doctrine of the Spirit's Influences* has been long the Subject of Ridicule;--- and his *Divine Operations*, in their Account, the *warm Raveries of an overheated Imagination*.--- Many nominal Christians seem scarce to have heard that there is a Holy Ghost; and Mankind in general were fallen into *some deep Sleep*, and *fatal Security*, with respect to another World and the Concerns of their immortal Souls.--- What then if God (willing to rouse a *secure Generation* --- to bear Testimony to the *Word of his Grace*, and to convince *Unbelievers*, that the *Residue of the Spirit* is with him) hath chosen to appear in *so remarkable a Manner*, to awake our Attention, and that all might see the Power of his *victorious Grace*, and hear of his *mighty Acts*?

The *Miracles* wrought by our Saviour, serv'd not only to prove his Divine Mission, being *Signs of Wisdom, Power and Goodness*; but to spread his Fame abroad, that the *most distant Nations* might enquire after him, and search into the *Nature of that Kingdom* he was to set up in the World.--- Had he not come with such *mighty Signs and Wonders*, not *Half so many* had heard of him, nor *so readily* believed on him.--- And in the present Case, had *double the Number* in the Parish of

C.A.M.

“ That there is no Reasoning from Effects upon the Body, as to
 “ the Nature of the Work upon the Mind, either one Way or the
 “ other.”

CAMBUSLANG been brought home to Christ in a more imperceptable Way, these **TROPHIES** of the Redeemer's Victory over Sin and Satan would in a great Measure lain hid from the Eyes of others: --- Whereas, thro' Report of *Things happening out of the usual Course*, MANY flock from all Corners; *they come, they see, they hear, they feel, they rejoice.*--- And Hundreds, now in Christ, cannot be supposed to have gone there, had not their Curiosity been excited by *these extraordinary Circumstances*; and consequently *might have still been without God, and without Hope in a World* ^p.

Besides, the *visible Distress* of those under Soul-agony, affords a lively Instance how *dreadful* the Displeasure of God! how *dangerous*, how *evil* Sin! and serve in place of many Arguments to make *surrounding Spectators* flee from the *Wrath that is to come.*--- It also gives Ministers a glorious Opportunity of exhorting their Hearers to *save themselves from an untoward Generation.*--- And, on the other Hand, Souls o'erpower'd with the Kindness of a Saviour, falling (with *John*) at their Redeemer's Feet, are a very bright Display of his *wonderful Love*, and *amazing Goodness.*--- The *amiable Sight* attracts our Affections; we wish to share in those unspeakable Joys, and long for the happy Time when *frail Nature*, having put on *Immortality*, shall be able to *see God and live*, spending an Eternity amidst his Praises, and under the more *immediate Shine* of boundless Compassion, without Weariness or Fainting; *the Spirit being then willing, and the Flesh not weak.*

Once more; "At an extraordinary Season, to use the
" Words

^p In a Letter from a Gentleman in Boston to the Reverend Mr. George Wistart, published by him, the Author of that Letter, tho' pretending that the late Work in New-England is in general enthusiastick, yet, thro' the Force of Truth, he is obliged to say, p. 21. "That he is of Opinion also, that the Appearances, among us (so much out of the ordinary Way, and so unaccountable to Persons not acquainted with the History of the World) have been the Means of, awakning the Attention of many; and a good Number, I hope, have settled into a truly Christian Temper."

“ *Words of another* ⁹, wherein God is pleased to carry
 “ on a Work of his Grace in a *more observable* and *glor-*
 “ *rious Manner*, in a Way which he would have taken
 “ Notice of by the World ; it seems reasonable to sup-
 “ pose there may be some *particular Appearances* in the
 “ Work of Conversion, which are not common at other
 “ Times, when yet there are true Conversions wrought ;
 “ or *some Circumstances*, attending the Work, may be
 “ carried to an *unusual Degree* and *Height*. If it were
 “ not thus, the Work of the Lord would not be so much
 “ regarded and spoken of, and so God would not have
 “ so much of the Glory, nor would the Work itself be
 “ like to *spread so fast* : For God has evidently made
 “ Use of *Example* and *Discourse* in the carrying it on.”

Thus there appear, even to us, *many good Reasons* why infinite Wisdom might *choose* that this Work should in *some* of its Subjects be attended with *unusual Symptoms* : --- And you see, that, *in Fact*, these Appearances have answered *several valuable Purposes* ; --- particularly, have served to awake the Attention of Mankind, fixing the Thoughts of Thousands upon *Death, Judgment* and *Eternity*, these awful Issues of Time ; and have been the *happy Means* of bringing *many to the saving Knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus*. --- But, after all, we don't pretend positively to say *why God has done thus* ; --- nor think it at all necessary in Support of our Argument, that we should be able to *assign* the Reasons of Divine Conduct. --- *This Knowledge is too wonderful for us ; 'tis high, we cannot attain it. --- 'Tis but a very small Part of God's Way we can know. --- How little a Portion is heard of him ! --- And his Paths are many Times in the deep Waters*, not to be fathomed by our *shallow Faculties*, --- far beyond the Reach of *human Ken*. ---

By this Time, *Dear Sir*, I am willing to hope you have received same Satisfaction as to the Matter before us, having, according to your Desire, *first*, represented

⁹ Mr. Cooper's Preface to Edwards' Sermon on the distinguishing Marks of the Spirit, &c.

fented this Affair in its vifible Appearance, *efpecially during the Time of Divine Worſhip*, which brings to View *Thousands of concerned Souls* proſtrate at the Feet of Mercy, hearing the Word with Gladneſs, and anxiously enquiring the Way to Heaven; many going forth weeping, ſeemingly bearing precious Seed; others returning again rejoicing, bringing their Sheaves with them: For the Truth of this, an Appeal is made to thoſe who attend their publick Miniſtrations:--- I have, next, conſidered the Accounts given by the *Subjects of this Work*, as to their *inward Attainments*, and various Springs whence their Tears of Sorrow or Joy flow. How far they are ſcriptural, you may judge, by comparing what is ſaid, p. 4, 5. with the ſacred Records. And, as to the Fact, you will allow that I am ONE Witneſs, and indeed but one, of the many more competent Judges already referred to, *Men of known Veracity*, who publiſh theſe Accounts from the Mouth of the Perſons themſelves. I have likewiſe mentioned ſome of the almoſt innumerable bleſſed Effects flowing from thoſe Operations upon their Minds, which plainly enough evidence themſelves the *genuine Fruits of the Spirit*, and ſtand confirmed by the *joint Teſtimony* of their reſpective Miniſters, and thoſe who have beſt Access to the neareſt View of their whole Conduct. I may add, *That they are become Enſamples to all them that believe*; for from them ſounds out the Word of the Lord, not only in CAMBUSLANG and KILSYTH, but alſo in every Place their Faith towards God is ſpread abroad, ſo that we need not ſay any Thing.--- Now their Light ſhines ſo before Men, that others ſeeing their good Works, glorify their Father who is in Heaven. The ſeveral Objections, brought againſt this Work, have alſo been conſidered, and, in my Apprehenſion, their Weakneſs diſcovered.

Upon

There is one other Objection, which I formerly omitted to notice, founded on a miſtaken Interpretation of our Lord's Words, Luke xvii. 20. *The Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation*, as if our Saviour had taught, that the Coming of the Kingdom

Upon the whole then, there seems here a *complete Proof*, so far as the Nature of the Thing will admit, that

of God, in the Conversion of Men, was to be silently set up, without Noise, and unobserved; contrary to Fact, and to the very Nature of the Thing. Mr. *Fisher*, quitting this Pretence, is pleased to say, p. 36. "Who ever denied that the Work is observable? for so is every remarkable Thing in the World, whether it be Good or Evil." But the Objection is, "That both the Promoters of this Work, and they who are ensnared therein, make so much Noise about their Conversion, and the Number of their Converts, that it is inconsistent with that Modesty and Humility which is the inseparable Concomitant of a Work of God." Scarce any Thing can be further from Truth, than to charge the Subjects of this Work with making Noise about their Conversion: Perhaps not any Age of the Church has produced more *modest, humble, self-denied* Christians. And I am apprehensive, from the Strain of Mr. *Fisher's* Reasoning elsewhere, that he thinks them chiefly to blame, in not making more Noise, by throwing off their own Ministers, their spiritual Fathers, and joining the *Associate Presbytery* in all their publick Appearances. But then, "The flattering and great swelling Words of Vanity, wherewith Messieurs *Whitefield, Webster* and others set off this Work, are truly grating to the Ears of any humble and self-denied Christian." *Grating* I believe indeed to Mr. *Fisher*; Must therefore the Subjects of this Work be under Delusion and satanical Influence? I don't remember to have given anywhere a stronger Representation of the Case than in the preceeding Page at this ~~W~~; and yet these *swelling Words of Vanity* are no other than the Words of the Holy Ghost, when speaking of the converted *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thess.* 1. 7, 8. Again, "The vain-glorious Boasting of the Promoters of this Work, and their high Encomiums of themselves, in their Journal, Histories and Pamphlets, wherewith the World is dunn'd," *offends* Mr. *Fisher*, "as contrary to the Character of the Kingdom of God, which cometh not with Observation." Alas! has Mr. *Fisher* forgot the high Encomiums the *Associate Presbytery* are pleased to give of themselves in all their Acts and Testimonies, as the witnessing Remnant, and the Reformers of the Age, &c. &c. Encomiums exclusive of others? Great Allowances, I apprehend, must be made in this Respect, or the Kingdom of God cannot come amongst them. It would look like *Consciousness of Guilt*, to vindicate this Letter from Self-commendation. 'Tis thought the Reader will find nothing here ascribed to Mr. *Webster*, as to his being any how useful in carrying on this good Work; he has chosen to draw a Vail over what perhaps might have been said if acting the Part of a vain-glorious Boaster, and desires to glory in nothing save in the Cross of Christ. Once more; Mr. *Fisher* observes, p. 7. "That the Apostle *Peter* was most successful of any we

that *Divine Influence* is the true Spring of this surprising Dispensation.--- A Proof not to be shaken by the *Laugh* of an INFIDEL, to whom all Religion is a Jest, Heaven

“ read of at one Time : But does he send Letters to all the
 “ Countries round about, to acquaint them that such a Day he
 “ had been instrumental in converting Three thousand? [*Per-*
 “ *haps he did.*] The Lord was pleased to send down a plenti-
 “ ful Rain of Divine Influences during the Time of Mr. *Living-*
 “ *ston's* Sermon at the *Kirk of Shots*; but doth he proclaim
 “ through all the World, that so many Hundreds were conver-
 “ ted at that Time by his Means? Nay, he draws a modest Vail
 “ over it in the History of his Life. [*He speaks of it in his Life once*
 “ *and again.*] These who did not preach themselves, but Christ
 “ Jesus the Lord, were not acquainted with this vain-glorious
 “ Way of *Dunning* the World with the Number of their Con-
 “ verts.” Is it Mr. *Fisher* that talks in this sneering Way of Con-
 “ version? Some observe, that *Joseph*, by living in the House of
 “ *Pharaoh*, learned to swear by the Life of *Pharaoh*; and 'tis Mat-
 “ ter of deep Regrete, that Mr. *Fisher* should enter so much into
 “ the Spirit and Way of those Mockers who join with him in his
 “ present Opposition to this blessed Work. The joyful Tidings of
 “ believing, repenting Sinners, returning to the God of Salvation,
 “ must pass under the opprobrious Name of *Dunning the World with*
 “ *a Number of Converts*: What remains for the profane Wits of the
 “ Age to say? Does not the Evangelist *Luke* proclaim to the World
 “ the Number of *Peter's* Converts? Has not the Holy Ghost handed
 “ this down to us, even in these distant Ages? Have not several
 “ Writers, and Mr. *Fisher* just now himself, recorded the plentiful
 “ Effusion of the Holy Ghost at the *Kirk of Shots*? Why then
 “ might not Mr. *Webster*, for the Divine Honour, for the Encourage-
 “ ment of a lost World to believe in Jesus, and in Confirmation of
 “ Christianity, declare what God had done for many Souls in the
 “ West, under the Ministry of Messieurs *McCulloch* and *Robe*? We
 “ know that *Paul* sent Epistles to the Countries round, in which he
 “ narrates the happy Success even of his own Ministrations, 1 *Cor.* xvi.
 “ 9. 1 *Thess.* Chap. i. 1st and 2d, and finds it necessary to vindicate his Cha-
 “ racter from the Attacks of false Apostles, by humbly acknowledging
 “ his superior Excellencies, higher Attainments, more indefatigable
 “ Labours, and their blessed Effects, 2 *Cor.* Chapters xi, xii. through-
 “ out. There is one Thing I would willingly learn of Mr. *Fisher*;
 “ Have he and his Brethren a Right to publish to the World, that
 “ the Work of God in the West is all Delusion, and the Effect of
 “ infernal Agency? May they keep Days of Fasting on this Account,
 “ and issue out and send their printed Edicts through all the Coun-
 “ try around? And must they, who know and believe that it is a
 “ Work of God, fold their Hands, and not venture to speak or write
 “ in its Defence? Is it in the Cause of God alone, that Men must
 “ be silent and ashamed to appear?

a Fool's Paradise, and Hell a mere Bugbear; --- nor by the Reproaches of a blind and ignorant WORLD, merely natural Men, who can't relish such pure Joys, or understand the Wonders of God's Grace, they being spiritually discern'd; --- nor by the hasty Verdict of such as pay only a passing Visit to Cambuslang, to find Matter of Cavilling; --- nor by the Misrepresentation of any SECT whatever, under the Power of Prejudice, and a visible Bias on account of their present Circumstances.

In this whole Argument, we suppose the Truth of CHRISTIANITY, and take it for granted that Men believe their Bibles: And therefore, upon this Supposition, it seems necessary, that whoever wou'd disprove this Work, must shew that the Account which the *Subjects thereof* give of the *inward Working* of their Mind, and its *Effect* upon their Lives, *is not according to the Law and the Testimony*, nor agreeable to the *Workings and Effects of the Spirit of God therein represented*; --- Or that this Work is attended with *certain Symptoms and Circumstances*, which make it *impossible* that it can come from God; --- Or that the *Evidence*, upon which the Truth of the Facts depend, is not such as the *Nature of the Thing* requires. --- If they are not able to prove ONE or OTHER of these Things, *hard Words, scurrilous Language, and virulent Invectives*, will go but little Way with an *impartial Enquirer*, --- and may tempt one to think these are used because Argument is wanting. --- For my Part, I shall find *no Leisure*, and have *much less Inclination*, to answer *Libels* of this Nature; --- And shall judge the Work of *Cambuslang, &c.* sufficiently vindicated from the Charge of *Delusion, Satanical Influence, and other unrighteous Censures*; --- while it remains true, that many are changed into the *Divine Nature*, evidenced by their walking in *Newness of Life*, --- *having a Conscience* (so far as we can judge) *void of Offence towards God and towards Man*. --- Upon *these* and the like *Facts* our Argument is built, and is not to be shaken 'till they are overturn'd.

I am now come, *Dear Sir*, to your other Request. You ask, *What Improvement we of this Age should make of this extraordinary Appearance of God in his Sanctuary?* --- Your Question, I apprehend, requires a *different Answer*, according to *our different Opinions and Circumstances*. ---

It may teach the ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY not to limit the Holy One of Israel in the Dispositions of his Grace, since God has yet made Choice of *our Zion*, and delights to dwell within the Gates of *our Jerusalem*; --- It should make them *more cautious* in separating from those whom the *great Master of Assemblies* condescends to countenance *so remarkably* with his Presence; --- And should bring them to reflect how far their *first Secession* is warranted from the Word of God, --- and for what Reason they proceeded *still* farther to a *total Separation*, even before the Assembly 1740^r.

It

^r " This, and what is said, p. 12. of this Letter, is Plain-dealing (says Mr. *Fisher*, p. 48.) here now is a Discovery of the whole Secret. This Work must be cried up as an undeniable Evidence of God's dwelling within the Gates of the established Church, and countenancing them remarkably with his Presence; and this, as the *last Shift*, must be improved to the best Advantage to bear down the Secession. But as the Lord in his great Mercy hath by this Time made it evident to the whole Kingdom, that these Prophets (*meaning the Promoters of this Work*) have seen a lying Divination, so I need say the less upon it." Indeed, was this Fact, he need not say any Thing at all; However, 'tis possible he may find, even after all his Endeavours, --- that the greater Part of the Kingdom are of very different Sentiments: And, if he had no such Apprehensions, why so much Pains, --- so much Labour and Time lost, in blackning a Work which the whole Kingdom already see and know to be a Delusion? --- The Reader will, I suppose, be sensible that Mr. *Fisher* has given a very ungrateful Return to a friendly Advice; and that in the above Paragraph cited from his *Review*, and elsewhere, particularly p. 35, & 47. he thinks fit to use Freedoms to which no Man is entitled.

Was any of the established Church so void of Charity and good Manners, as to repay him in his own Coin, --- by telling the World, " That Mr. *Fisher* and his Brethren did not oppose this Work because convinced that it was a Delusion; --- but that all their Warnings, Preachings, Reviews, Fastings, &c, proceeded from an Apprehension that the Secession was in Danger, and their

" Cha-

It should convince Unbelievers that there is a HOLY GHOST, and make them at length admit the *Divine Original* of Christianity: --- Every Soul, brought from a *State of Nature* to a *State of Grace*, may be reckon'd a new *Miracle* in Confirmation of the Gospel. --- When *natural Men*, the *spiritually Blind*, are inlightned in the Knowledge of themselves, and of a Saviour; when a *dead Sinner* is raised into *Newness of Life*; we have the *same Signs of Power*, and a *Proof of greater Goodness*, than when *Sun, Moon and Stars* were lighted up in the first World, or when a *dead Corpse* is called into Being. God, says Paul ^t, who commanded the *Light to shine out of Darkness*, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the *Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*; --- And he represents the same Power that raised

“ Character at Stake; --- here now is a Discovery of the whole
 “ Secret: A dying Secession must be revived, and this Work
 “ cried down, lest there should be an undeniable Evidence of God's
 “ dwelling within the Gates of the established Church, and of his
 “ crowning her Ministers Labours with remarkable Success; ---
 “ and this, as the *last Shift*, must be improved to the best Ad-
 “ vantage for ruining the Ministry of many faithful Servants
 “ of Jesus. --- 'Tis no Breach of Charity to say, that those who
 “ reason at this Rate, are either under the Power of a *blind In-*
 “ *fatuation*, or are grossly imposing on the People, p. 47. And it
 “ seems to be sadly verified with respect to the Opposers of this
 “ Work, what the Lord says, *Jer. vi. 13. From the Prophet even*
 “ *unto the Priest, every one dealeth falsely*, p. 35.” Did these who
 judge favourably of this Work, thus answer Mr. *Fisher* in his own
 Stile and Way; then might he justly charge them also, in his
 own Words, “ with entering into his Heart, canvassing the secret
 “ Springs of his Actions, and loading him with the basest Cal-
 “umnies.” --- The Application is left to himself. One must think
 the Secession very formidable, and the Promoters of this Work
 very wicked, before they can be supposed as only acting a Part
 to deceive the World, and lying upon the Holy Ghost, to break
 down the Secession; which, says Mr. *Fisher*, is the *grand Plot*. ---
 A poor Plot indeed! --- If Mr. *Fisher* will suffer me once more to
 deal plainly, I can assure him there appears to me no need of
 Art or Stratagem to break down a Secession, which, if managed
 at this Rate in direct Opposition to the Work of God, will prob-
 ably fall of itself.

^t 2 Cor. iv. 6.

raised Jesus from the *Dead*, as working in them that believe ^u.

Seeing one Soul thus *inlightened*, thus quickned, sets before us a lively Instance of *boundless Compassion* and *almighty Power*; How convincing the Argument, when great Numbers, as in the present Case, are born at once! If we reflect but a little upon the present degenerate State of Mankind, and think how much Sinners are in themselves corrupted and depraved, the Power of the Highest will seem necessary to inlighten their benighted Minds, to conquer their rebellious Will, and quicken their lifeless Souls.— And if to this you add, that these evil and wicked Inclinations of Mens Spirits, whereby they are Enemies to God and all Righteousness, are continually cherished and fomented by surrounding Temptations to Sin, especially by another Spirit distinct from their own, that is, the Devil, the Spirit that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience;— It will be still more evident, that sinful Man must remain in a State of Corruption and Slavery, until the Spirit of the living God lift up a Standard against this evil Spirit, and dispossess him.---- He alone is able to outwit the Policy of Hell, and overcome the Powers of the infernal Host.

This Truth will yet farther appear, by observing, that, In FACT, mere REASON and ARGUMENT, and all external Means whatever, which can be supposed to change the Heart, and work a thorow Reformation, have hitherto proved ineffectual, when destitute of the concurring Influence of the Holy Ghost: Witness the present Phenomena of the moral World.

It will not be much disputed, that there are but few comparatively speaking, even in the Christian World, and in these very Parts that enjoy the clearest Light, and every other Advantage,—very few, who deserve the Character of Religious and Good, Sober and Just, Honest and Upright, who are in Reality the Disciples of the meek and holy Jesus. If then mere Reason and Argument,

or

^u Eph. i. 19, 20. & ii. 1, 5, 6.

or any other Cause exclusive of the Spirit of God, is sufficient to convert Men; — what means this *universal Depravation*, while scarce any, are either *willing or dare* to be religious? — If *Heaven and Hell, endless Glory or everlasting Torments*, don't move the Mind; what *Motive*, what *external Mean* possibly can? What below *supernatural Influence*? — It is not sufficient to say, that Men do not believe, or do not attend to, these Things: — For if *such is*, and *such always* hath been, the *thoughtless unbelieving State of Mankind*, that neither *Miracles nor Reasoning, Prosperity nor Adversity*, cou'd make them reflect, and conquer their Unbelief; this, in my Apprehension, plainly speaks out *the Necessity of the Spirit's Influence*, to awake Consideration, and determine to believe.

Suffer me to add, That there is nothing *more common and rational*, than Mens determining themselves by *probable Evidence*, in Opposition to *Certainty*. This is the Case in *TRADE and COMMERCE*; a *real Stock* is laid out, in Hope of a *greater Return*. Now, the *Existence of God and Christ, Heaven and Hell, being at least possible*, and what almost every one will allow *highly probable*; --- and it being further plain, that a *very faint Expectation of endless Joy* infinitely downweighs *all finite Good*, --- and that the *remotest possible Hazard of eternal Misery* doth *vastly more* than o'erbalance the *whole Afflictions* of this transitory State; --- it follows, that (suppose there was nothing in Religion but *Probability*, yea, that the Doctrine of a future State was *only possible*) Mankind should be thence more influenced to aspire towards this *Possible World*, than they are to act in the *Natural and Civil Life*, by the *highest Degree of probable Evidence*. --- Whence, then, are *all Appearances* to the contrary? --- Whence is it, that the *Labourer* cheerfully sows his Seed into the Earth, when he cannot *certainly* say whether or not it shall prosper? --- Why does the *Seafaring Man* commit his *ALL* to the Mercy of *Wind and Waves*, upon an *uncertain Prospect* of increasing his Stock; --- while, as to the *Religious Life*, almost

almost all Men, rather than part with some mere imaginary present Pleasure, not essential to the Happiness of an immortal Spirit, forego the Hope of Heaven ; --- rather than quit with a little inglorious worldly Ease, run the Hazard of eternal Disquiet and Trouble ? Whence this foolish Conduct ? What Reason can be assigned for this Difference of Action in the Civil and Religious Life, but that such is the Enmity of the carnal Mind against God and Religion, such the Incapacity of dead Sinners for living to the Purposes of Heaven and Eternity, that neither Hopes nor Fears, nor any other external Means, are sufficient of themselves to conquer this Enmity ; that nothing but the almighty Spirit of God, can make them alive unto God.

A great deal more might be said to shew that the small, the exceeding small Number of the Righteous in comparison of the Wicked, of the Good in respect of the Bad, or the long-continued universal Corruption of Mankind notwithstanding all Means used to reclaim them, cannot be sufficiently accounted for, upon any other Supposition but that supernatural Influence is wanting to effectuate the mighty Work ; and that FEW direct their Eyes towards God, and depend in a right Manner upon his Assistance.

And so we may again conclude, That every Soul, translated from the Power of Satan into the Kingdom of God, is a new Attestation to the Divinity of a despised Gospel ; --- And consequently, that great Numbers (as in the present Case) thus brought at once from Darkness to Light, demonstrate the Power of an enthroned Redeemer, and proclaim aloud that there is a HOLY GHOST. --- If the FACT is disputed, that a real Change is wrought upon the Mind and Practice of many stout-hearted Sinners ; --- let such Unbelievers disprove the Evidence on which it is built, or enquire for themselves. --- It is not a Thing done in a Corner, or upon a Time, and in a Place no Body knows where or when : We attest what has but lately happened, we point out the Scene of Action ; and thus there is no Opportunity wanting

ting to detect the Fraud, *supposing there was a Design to impose.*--- But if, *admitting the Fact*, they will still exclude the Holy Ghost out of our World, it is expected they will tell us by what *happy Mean*, so many obstinate Sinners, *formerly unmoved with every Argument*, have been *at once captivated into the Obedience of Christ*:--- Let them say how such *hard and rocky Hearts* have been dissolved, insolent Passions subdued, furious Lusts mortified, and the most *disorderly Spirits* commanded into *Calm and Quiet*:--- Let them describe whence *corrupt Nature* is changed into the *Divine Image*, the inveterate Habits of dark *vitious Minds* are transformed into *Light and Holiness*, and the *Subjects of this Work* generally quite other Men, other Creatures, than they have been; so that they move in a *new Sphere*, and their Conduct directly opposite to what it once was.--- If they will exclude the *Spirit of the Lord*, it is reasonable they should condescend upon *some other Cause* proportionable to *such an Effect*.--- Until then,

We wou'd have CHRISTIANS to improve this *remarkable Descent of the Holy Ghost*, for strengthening their Faith and Hope as to the Accomplishment of all the other Promises of the Outpouring of the Spirit, *when the Kingdoms of this World shall become the Kingdoms of our God and of his Christ*;— And for encouraging their joint *Supplications*, that this whole Land, and all the Churches of Christ, may be watered with the same blessed Dew of Heaven v. —

We ought also to admire *Divine Goodness; Sovereign Grace, Long-suffering Patience.*— Hath God come thus suddenly into his Temple by a *glorious Ministration of his Spirit*; and shall we not meet him with our *humble Praises*, and *grateful Acknowledgments*?—It may be said of us, as of the Jews of old, *Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, — of the Lord of Hosts,*

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tho'

v Since the first Publication of this Letter, a Pamphlet has been published on the above Argument, intitled, *The Signs of the Times*, which well-deserves the Reader's careful Perusal.

tho' their Land was filled with Sin against the holy One of Israel ^w. — Should not so much undeserved Kindness, this wonderful Love, melt us down into Tears of godly Sorrow, and bring us to a free and ingenuous Acknowledgment of all our Sins, whether personal or of a more publick Nature? — And methinks 'tis an endearing Call to endeavour, in our proper Spheres, the Reformation of Church and State, beginning at our own Hearts and Houses, that every Soul and Family, and every Place, may be a fit Habitation for Jacob's mighty God ^x.

It should teach MINISTERS not to despond, tho' their Labours have not hitherto been so remarkably successful; And should powerfully recommend to them, instead of labour'd Sentences, and harmonious Periods, the plain Preaching of Christ crucified, the blessed Mean in the Hand of the Spirit whence this Work had its first Rise, and by which it has hitherto been so happily carried on.

It should make all Ranks desirous to feel the Divine Influence, and share of the heavenly Blessing. — If this precious Season of Grace, this happy Conjunction of Circumstances, is not improved, they may never all meet again. — Now God is striving by his Word, by his Providence, and by his Spirit; but, if we continue to reject the heavenly Call, his Spirit will not always strive with us;

^w Jer. li. 5.

^x Since I have here in such plain Words, and that other Writers (see Mr. Willison's Preface to Edwards Sermon) insist also on the Necessity of publick as well as private Reformation, as the proper Improvement of this surprising Dispensation of the Grace of God; One would think that Mr. Fisher must have Abundance of Assurance, and depends not a little on the Credulity of his Readers, when venturing to say, p. 26. "Can any of the Promoters of this Work alledge for themselves, that they are making the least Essay towards publick Reformation, as it has been owned and professed by these Lands?" Nay, as shall afterwards be made appear, they are doing what they can to obliterate the Memory of Scotland's Covenanted Reformation, and to raze all Concern thereanent out of the Minds of the People." How he has made this appear with respect to Mr. Webster, has been shewn, marginal Note, p. 26; 27. of this Letter; and I am informed it will very soon be made evident to the World, that his Charge against others, has no better Foundation.

us; there must be an End of *Patience* and *Forbearance*: The *Mercy-seat* may soon remove, a *flaming Tribunal* appear, and the *Sceptre of Peace* change into the *Sword of Justice*. In these *awful Moments*, they who have despised this *Mercy* of the Lamb, shall perish by the *Wrath* of the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*. Present Opportunities, of attaining everlasting Life, being then *for ever lost, over and gone*, can only serve to *heighten* their Misery, and *render* Hell more intolerable.

I shall conclude with observing, That the *warm Opposition* made to this *Divine Work* by several GOOD MEN thro' Misinformation or *mistaken Zeal*, and the *slippery Precipice* on which they now stand, may teach us, that it is indeed a dangerous Thing to censure without *proper Enquiry*. It may serve likewise as a *solemn Warning* against a *Party-spirit*, which so far blinds the Eye &c. It gives also a noble Opportunity for the Exercise of *Christian Sympathy* and *Charity* toward these our *erring Brethren*, and should make us long for a Remove to *Mount Moriah*, the Land of *Vision* above, *where all the true Lovers of Jesus shall indeed dwell together in perfect Unity*; — Where are no *Wranglings*, no *Strivings* about Matters of Faith; — Where, the *whole Scene* of present Worship being removed, *we shall see no more darkly as through a Glass, but Face to Face*; — Where *perfect Light* will lay a Foundation for *perfect Harmony* and *Love*.

It is with peculiar Pleasure that I often think of this *happy Meeting* of ALL the scattered Flock of Christ, in the immediate Presence of their dear Redeemer, *the chief Shepherd and Bishop of their Souls*; — And have not the *least Doubt* but that my good Friend, *Ebenezer*, shall

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then

Y Mr. Fisher's Review confirms me more and more of what is here observed; and seems a melancholly Proof of what he says himself, p. 3. "It is well known from sad Experience, that, when once a People are in the righteous Judgment of God given up to *strong Delusion* to believe a Lie, reasoning with them is entirely needless; they will be Proof against the strongest Arguments from Scripture or Reason, till such Time as the Captain of Salvation overcome the strong Man within them, and spoil him of his Armour wherein he trusted."

then enter into the everlasting Mansions with many glorified Saints, whom the ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY have now given over as the Property of Satan.* May

* The Reader will now judge if through this whole Letter the Associate Presbytery, particularly the original Seceders of whom Mr. Fisher is one, have the least Reason to complain of indecent Treatment; -- or if from the above Paragraph, or anywhere else, Mr. Fisher had Ground to say, as he does, p. 67. that "it appears that the Associate Presbytery is Mr. Webster's greatest Eye-sore; he brings them in upon every Turn: And, because Argument fails, he enters their Heart, and canvasses the secret Springs of their Actions. He loads them with the basest Calumnies, --- nothing less than the giving up of ALL that differ from them as the Property of Satan." Good Mr. Fisher! these Words seem to speak out a Mind not a little sowed some how or other. -- If it can any way ease the Disorder, he may believe that the Associate Presbytery and their Adherents are by no means the Object of Mr. Webster's Envy, but of his Pity and Compassion. Many of them he loves as Brethren in Christ, and wishes well to all of them.

Seeing the Ministers of the Secession have published in their Act for a Fast, and several other Papers, that the Subjects of this Work are under the Power of Delusion, satanical Influence, infernal Agency, -- and, p. 38. of the Review, seized as the Camissars, with a diabolick Spirit; --- it can be no Calumny to say, as above, that the Associate Presbytery have now, or for the present, given over MANY as the Property of Satan. --- Nor is this Expression stronger than what the Apostle Paul uses, when only excommunicating Persons, 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. Some --- concerning the Raith have made Shipwreck; --- of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme, See also 1 Cor. v. 5. --- But the base Calumny, wherewith Mr. Webster loads the Associate Presbytery "is (says Mr. Fisher) the giving up of ALL that differ from them as the Property of Satan." --- If Mr. Webster has said so, let him underly what Punishment the Associate Presbytery shall please to inflict; --- but, if Mr. Fisher has ventured upon such an Assertion without the least Foundation, 'tis left with himself to judge what Part he has acted, and what Answer he would probably receive from a Man of his own Temper, and a Writer in his own Stile.

His farther Remark, p. 68. upon the above Paragraph, of my "seeing only ONE of the Associate Presbytery in Heaven, who, in the Judgment of Charity, was in the Way to it before Mr. Webster had a Being in the World," --- is almost too ludicrous to require a Reply. --- To suppose that a Man whom, he tells us, is for boundless Toleration and Liberty of Conscience, would shut the Gates of Heaven upon a very numerous Sect, one excepted, requires a clear Proof. --- I could not have thought Mr. Fisher so unacquainted with the common Forms of Speech, or so forgetful of my favour-
able

May they soon see their Mistake, and may we yet altogether be happily unite in the Bonds of *Peace and Truth!*
I am, with all due Respect,

Dear Sir,

Your obedient, humble Servant,

Edinb. August 30.

1742.

ALEX. WEBSTER.

P. S. When I had the Pen in my Hand, to vindicate the Postscript of the former Edition, where I supposed the Reverend Mr. Gibb's Warning and Appendix contained the best Answer to itself of any Thing then published, the following Letter was providentially brought me, which, I readily own, is still a fuller Confutation of Mr. Gibb's leading Principle, That a Man cannot be a Minister of Christ, who has only Episcopal Ordination. And, what is of much greater Consequence in the present Argument, it will be found a compleat Answer to Mr. Fisher's Review, and a judicious Defence of the Work at Cambuslang. If the Sentiments of a very noted Member of the Associate Presbytery be of any Weight with Messieurs Fisher and Gibb, it is hoped that they will be at length convinced. The Reverend Mr. Ralph Erskine's Sermon, intituled, The true Christ no new Christ, preached August 9. 1742. the Act of the Associate Presbytery, &c. were lying before me. What a Chain of surprising Thoughts filled my Mind, I cannot possibly express; but would willingly entertain the agreeable Prospect, that the Publication of this Letter may be a happy Mean of bringing the Author and all other good Men to think favourably of the present Divine Work, leaving the Opposition to be managed by the Enemies of God and of all Righteousness.

Copy

able Opinion of the Associate Presbytery, expressed at no greater Distance than the preceding Page and many other Places of this Letter, as to imagine that I designed to say, My good Friend Ebenezer, exclusive of all his Brethren, would enter the everlasting Mansions: -- But, seeing the Author of the Review is under this Apprehension, I once intended to have named others of whom it cannot be said, "that they were in the Way to Heaven before Mr. Webster had a Being in the World." -- However, being already suspected of too extensive Charity, I forbear; -- and have done with the Reverend Mr. Fisher's Remarks upon this Letter, which I believe will appear, as observed in the Preface, to have scarce any Connection with the main Argument, and might have been overlooked without much Disadvantage to the Cause.

Copy of a LETTER from the Reverend Mr. Ralph Erskine Minister of the Gospel at Dunfermline, to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley a Minister of the Church of England.

“ I Desire to bless my Lord, for the good and great News
 “ your Letter bears, about the Lord’s turning many
 “ Souls from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of
 “ Satan unto God, and that such a great and effectual Door
 “ is opened among you as the many Adversaries cannot
 “ shut. O may he that hath the Keys of the House of Da-
 “ vid, that openeth and no Man shutteth, and shutteth and
 “ no Man openeth, set the Door of Faith more and more
 “ open among you, till his House be filled, and till he ga-
 “ ther together the Outcasts of Israel; and may that Prayer
 “ for the Adversaries be heard, *Fill their Faces with Shame,*
 “ *that they may seek thy Name, O Lord!*
 “ As to the *outward Manner*, you speak of, wherein
 “ most of them were affected who were cut to the Heart
 “ by the Sword of the Spirit; No Wonder that this was at
 “ first surprising to you, since they are indeed so very rare
 “ that have been thus pricked and wounded: Yet some
 “ of the Instances you give *seem to be exemplified* in the
 “ outward Manner wherein Paul and the Jaylor were at
 “ first affected, as also Peter’s Hearers, *Acts ii.* The last
 “ Instance you give, of some Struggling, as in the Agonies
 “ of Death, and in such a Manner as that four or five strong
 “ Men can hardly restrain a weak Woman from hurting her-
 “ self or others *; This is to me *somewhat more* inexpli-
 “ cable, if it do not resemble the Child spoke of, *Mark ix.*

“ 26.

* Here is one of the strongest imaginable Cases, *some strug-
 gling as in the Agonies of Death, and in such a Manner that four
 or five strong Men can hardly restrain a weak Woman from hurting
 herself or others;* of which there is no Instance at Cambuslang,
 nor indeed of any Thing so surprising and inexplicable: And yet
 Mr. Erskine will not pretend to say but that it may be the Conse-
 quence of sudden and sharp Awaknings, and may issue well; or
 that, suppose Satan may exert himself on such Occasions, there
 may nevertheless be a Work of God carrying on at the same Time;
 And, in this, exactly agrees with what I have said in the Preface;
 I don’t know but that Satan, as he was allowed to inflict painful
 Diseases upon the Body of an upright Job, may still in some Cases
 be permitted to affect their Bodies in whose Soul God may have begun
 a saving Work, and at the Time thereof.

“ 26. and *Luke ix. 42.* of whom it is said, that *while he*
 “ *was yet coming, the Devil threw him down and tare him;*
 “ or what Influence *sudden and sharp Awaknings* may have
 “ upon the Body, I pretend not to explain: But I make
 “ no question *Satan*, so far as he gets Power, may exert
 “ himself on such Occasions, partly to hinder the good Work
 “ in the Persons who are thus touched with the sharp Ar-
 “ rows of Conviction, and partly to disparage the Work of
 “ God, as if it tended to lead People to Distraction: How-
 “ ever, the merciful Issue of these Conflicts, in the Con-
 “ version of the Persons thus affected, is the main Thing.
 “ When they are brought by the saving Arm of God to
 “ receive Jesus Christ, to have Joy and Peace in Believing,
 “ and then to walk in him, and give Evidence that the
 “ Work is a saving Work at length, whether more quickly
 “ or gradually accomplished, there is great Matter of Praise.
 “ All the outward Appearances of Peoples being affected
 “ among us may be reduced to those two Sorts; One is,
 “ Hearing with a close, silent Attention, with Gravity and
 “ Greediness, discovered by *fixt Looks, weeping Eyes, and*
 “ *sorrowful or joyful Countenances.* Another Sort is, When
 “ they lift up their Voice aloud, some more depressedly and
 “ others more highly, and at Times the whole Multitude
 “ in a Flood of Tears, all as it were crying out at *once*;
 “ till their Voice be ready to drown the Minister's, that he
 “ can scarce be heard for the *weeping Noise* that surrounds
 “ him. The Influence on some of these, like a Land-flood,
 “ dries up, we hear of no Change wrought; but in *others*
 “ it appears in the *Fruits of Righteousness*, and the Tract
 “ of a holy Conversation. May the Lord strengthen you
 “ to go on in his Work, and in praying for the coming of
 “ his Kingdom with you and us! and I hope you shall
 “ not be forgotten among us, in our joint Applications to
 “ the Throne of Grace. I am,

This Letter is in Mr.
 Wesley's Journal
 p. 62.—June 1739.

Reverend and dear Sir,
 Your very affectionate Brother, and
 Servant in Christ, R. E.

There seems nothing more needful to be believed, for vindi-
 cating the Work at Cambuslang, than what the Reverend
 Mr. Erskine here allows; and, I should think, his deliberate
 Sentiments upon the Question, when not under any Bias by
 reason of his Situation and Connections, ought to be more re-
 garded than his Opposition to the present blessed Work, when
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under the Power of Prejudice, and a visible Bias on account of his Circumstances. It will certainly occasion him many Thoughts of Heart, if he compare what he has writ here, with the Act of the Associate Presbytery anent a Fast, in which, I suppose, he joined. The Act says; "'Tis no Wonder that the Lord hath, in his righteous Displeasure, left this Church and Land to give such an open Discovery of their Apostasy from him, in the fond Reception Mr. George Whitefield has met with, notwithstanding that it is not tourly known that he is a Priest of the Church of England, who hath sworn the Oath of Supremacy, and abjured the Solemn League and Covenant." And yet Mr. Erskine, in the above Letter, blesses God for the Success of Mr. Wesley's Ministry, and subscribes himself his very affectionate Brother and Servant in Christ, who was then, and is still a Priest of the Church of England, and who has, as well as Mr. Whitefield, sworn the Oath of Supremacy; and consequently, according to the Doctrine of the Associate Presbytery, has abjured the Solemn League and Covenant.

After reviewing Mr. Erskine's Letter, I can scarce believe my Eyes, when reading p. 25. of his True Christ no new Christ.— "Every new Christ, that was not to be seen in the Bible Yesterday, is a false Christ; new and strange Sorts of Convictions are to be suspected; if, instead of Convictions, we hear of Convulsions, bitter Outcryings, Frights, Fainings and Foamings, how delusive is the Work!" And again, p. 33. "The true Christ is he that comes in the still small Voice of the Gospel, which alone is the Power of God to Salvation and Conversion, while therein is revealed the Righteousness of God from Faith to Faith, Rom. i. 16, 17. But the new Christ, the false Christ of our Day, appears, as it were, in a Whirlwind, driving poor People out of their Wits and Senses; beating down their Bodies with Pains and Convulsions, Distempers and Distractions." Thine own Mouth condemneth thee, and not I; yea, thine own Lips testify against thee: And surely, happy is he that condemneth not himself in that Thing which he alloweth.

ERRATA.

After Acts and Testimonies, marginal Note, p. 49. l. 35. Add Writings and Papers.

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